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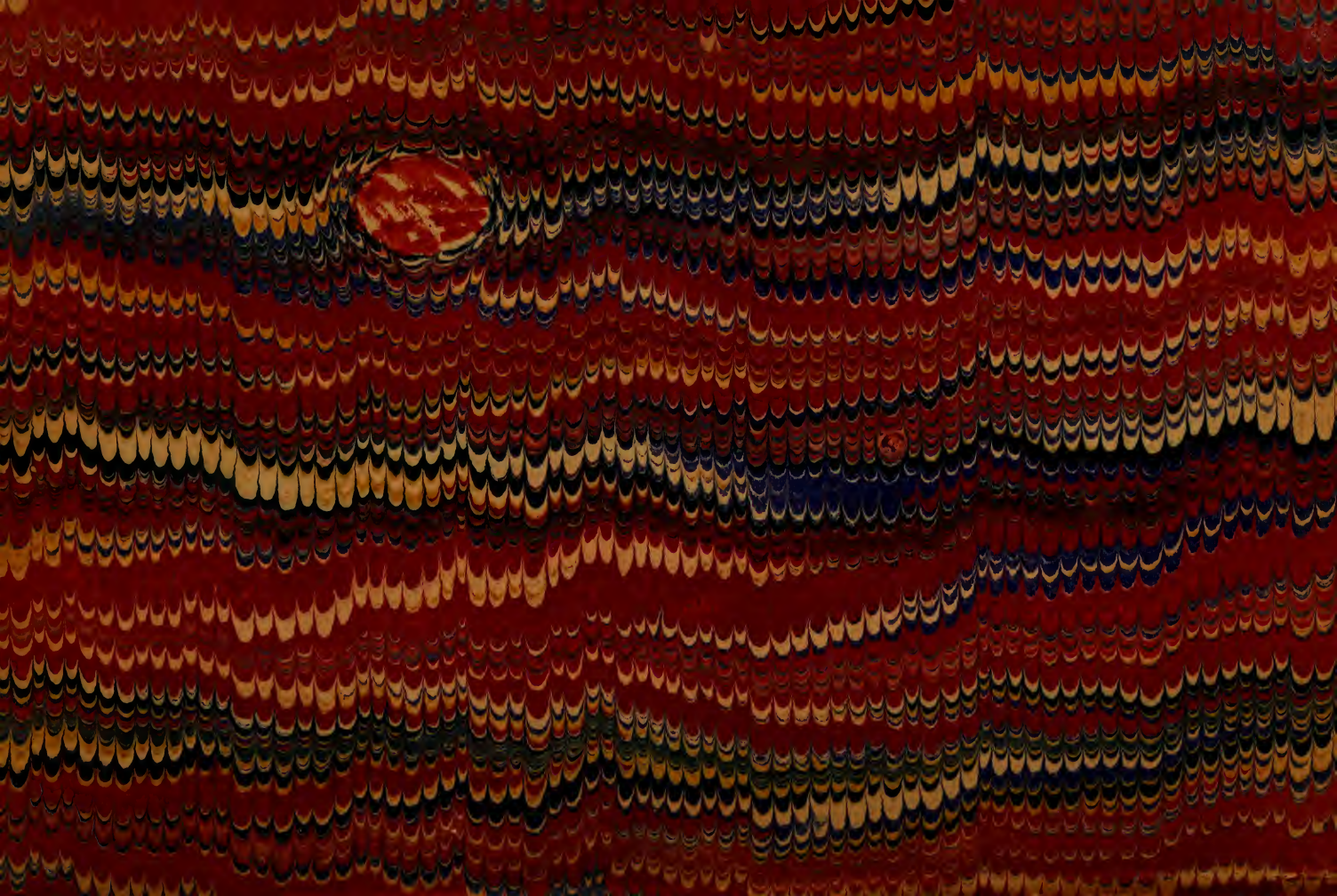

Chicago Tabernacle Talks

By Evangelist GEO. F. HALL

OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES)

STENOGRAPHIC REPORTS
OF ACTUAL SERMONS
PREACHED AT A
"REVIVAL THAT REVIVED"

INTRODUCTION BY
THE SECRETARY OF THE
CHICAGO CHRISTIAN EN-
DEAVOR UNION

Do you care to know more of the faith in which JAMES A. GARFIELD lived and died? Is it worth looking into? If so read this book.

Geo. F. Hall.

CHICAGO TABERNACLE TALKS

BY

EVANGELIST GEO. F. HALL

WITH INTRODUCTORY REMARKS FROM THE PEN OF
MISS JESSIE WILLIAMS, SECRETARY CHICAGO
CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR UNION

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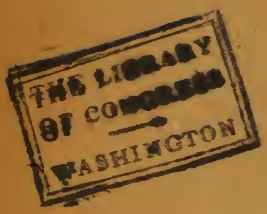

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"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom;

"Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

II. Tim. 4:1-5.

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INTRODUCTORY.

The thirteen sermons comprising this work were delivered at the Christian Tabernacle, Chicago, by the distinguished evangelist, Rev. Geo. F. Hall, stenographically reported by Miss M. M. Gilmer, and revised by their author especially for this book.

The revival in which these addresses were presented was one of the most successful series of special meetings ever held by any single church in the history of religious work in Chicago. One hundred and seventeen persons were added to the congregation under whose auspices the services were conducted, over $6,000 raised for religious purposes, and the membership quickened in spiritual zeal as never before. And all this under peculiarly adverse circumstances, and among a comparatively poor people in this world's goods.

As Mr. Hall has never conducted a revival outside of his own church (the Christian, or Disciples', in which he has a world-wide reputation), he is not so *generally* known as Moody, Jones, Mills, Pentecost, and others whose lives have been devoted to *union* work. The following account of this particular revival, therefore, embracing as it does a brief biography of the great preacher, will doubtless prove exceedingly interesting to all readers of this book. It was writ-

ten by Miss Jessie Williams, a prominent member of the West Side Church of Christ, and Secretary of the Chicago Endeavor Union. The article appeared in the *Christian Standard*, of Cincinnati, Ohio, one of the leading periodicals of the Christian Church in America.

THE HALL-HUTTO MEETING IN CHICAGO.

In these closing years of the nineteenth century, a quickening impulse is discernible in every department of human activity, and this is displayed in the religious world especially by the growth of revivals. Years gone by it was the popular opinion that "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" came only in the winter season, but mankind has outgrown that idea. This is an era of revivals; an epoch of spiritual house-cleaning. Whether the wild flowers of spring are blooming on the lonely grave, or the birds of summer are singing a requiem over its peaceful occupant; whether the breeze is kissing the golden grain and the blushing fruit, or the wearied earth is sleeping under a coverlet of snow—whatever the season and environments, a revival will almost invariably succeed in "reviving."

Within the last decade this happy result has often been secured even in Chicago, apparently one of the most difficult fields for gospel work—a city absorbed in getting and spending money, and characterized by a callous neglect of the demands of a spiritual life. Here are thousands of starving souls that refuse to partake of the bread of life; thousands who are sick but will not call the Great Physician; thousands who are homeless, though invited to mansions of splendor; and thousands of wearied, sick and homeless ones who seemingly are satisfied with their condition.

The difficulty attending revival work in Chicago may be judged by the fact that when the famous sectarian evangelist, B. Fay Mills, held a meeting on the West Side last autumn, participated in by about twenty congregations, after his most tireless labors for many weeks, seconded by the earnest efforts of perhaps eight thousand Christians, it is stated that only about two thousand were "converted," and I have since heard it said (with how much authority I know not) that less than five hundred of that number have united with any church. Notwithstanding these meager visible results, Chicago was better for Mr. Mills having been here. It was a revival that "revived."

The meetings of which I make especial mention were held at the West Side Church of Christ, Chicago, by Evangelist Geo. F. Hall, assisted by his musical director, Prof. E. M. Hutto. Bro. J. W. Allen, widely and favorably known in our brotherhood, has been the pastor of this congregation for ten years, and the hearts of pastor and people are knit with the golden cords of an unchanging love.

During almost the entire seven weeks of the revival the weather was very unpropitious. It is needless to remind the reader that during the month of May the weather clerk issued his daily bulletin, announcing not that it "may" rain, but that it might, could, would and should rain ceaselessly, relentlessly and untiringly. It is impossible to estimate the injurious effect of the somber clouds, the constant gloom and heavy rains. Notwithstanding this great obstacle and the fact that in the midst of the meeting the congregation vacated the old building and moved to a hall six blocks distant, in spite of these obstacles, and others neither few nor small, God's blessing was upon the meeting, and one hundred and seventeen were added to the church. It was a revival that "revived."

In view of the fact that Brother Hall is one of the successful evangelists of the Christian Church, the readers of the "Standard" will be interested in the following sketch of his life:

Geo. F. Hall, eldest son of John and Mary Hall, was born near Clarksville, Ia., September 23, 1864. His father, a native of Kentucky, and a farmer by occupation, removed to McLean county, Illinois, in his childhood. In 1862 he removed to Butler county, Ia., where he married Miss Mary J. Barnard. Both were ardent Disciples, and reared their children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." At the age of seventeen, Brother Hall entered Drake University, and three years later preached his first sermon. His early inclinations were toward journalism, which profession he followed for some time with success. However, when bereaved by the death of his mother, in 1884, he decided to give himself to the ministry. His first charge was at Manhattan, Kan., where he became pastor of the Christian church in April, 1886. During the same year he was married to Miss Laura Woods, of that city, a talented lady whose beautiful face and lovely character have won for her a host of warm personal friends, while her talent as a singer and accompanist are an invaluable aid to Brother Hall in his work. They have two bright boys, Paul and Barton. Their home is one of happiness and mutual helpfulness.

After one and one-half years of successful work at Manhattan, Brother Hall accepted a call to the church at Lincoln, the same State, and later took charge of the church at Emporia for two and one-half years. He became well and favorably known in that cultured city, preaching to large audiences and receiving four hundred and forty members into the church while its pastor. He had flattering invitations to other cities,

but having put off sixty calls for revival meetings during the last year of his pastorate, decided to devote himself to the work of an evangelist. He engaged Prof. Ed. M. Hutto as soloist and musical director, and during the nine months in which he has labored as an evangelist over seven hundred have been added to the churches under his labors.

In his meetings Brother Hall introduces modern methods effectively, and especially impresses upon his hearers the power of personal work. He urges the introduction of business methods into religious enterprises, and the pulling aside of the curtains which have thrown over the church the darkness of the mediæval ages. His plea is to modernize, not the truth itself, but ways and means of making the truth effective. He is a hard worker. In addition to his almost ceaseless speaking seven nights in the week he does much literary work. He has already copyrighted several books, and has two more almost ready for the printer.

Combining a fine physique with perfect ease in the pulpit, Brother Hall impresses a stranger favorably. As he has a clear, rich voice, and is exceedingly fond of music, he not infrequently sings an appropriate stanza in the midst of a discourse, or joins with Professor Hutto in a duet during the opening service. His success lies in his unwavering faith in God; the intense earnestness which makes every utterance burn into the soul of the hearer; the concentrated enthusiasm which expects mighty triumphs for Christ; and the broad knowledge of human nature which uses the Saviour's love as an open sesame to the heart. He is a fearless speaker, and has plenty of ammunition to fire at the citadels of boastful vanity where agnosticism, infidelity and skepticism mingle in unholy revelry. He constantly appeals to the Scriptures for

proof of every position taken on the vital questions he discusses, and his sermons are marvels of simplicity, directness and conclusiveness. Old Disciples say that he is "as clear as a bell on our plea." When thrilled by the grandeur of his theme, his impassioned eloquence carries the audience spellbound to the loftiest heights. Truly, it may be said of him that he is

> "Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
> The love of love."

In alluding to his success as an evangelist he says that it is not his superior eloquence that wins men and women to Christ, but the truth. Certain it is that hiding behind the cross he points up to the crown, and pleads with all mankind to confess that name which is above every other name; that name which, if not confessed here, must be confessed hereafter, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess him Lord of all.

The last day of the meeting was the best of all. The "clear shining after rain" drew large audiences to the Tabernacle. The morning audience numbered 700, and the evening congregation 1,000, while in the afternoon 600 listened to his lecture for men only. The farewell service closed with eight confessions, a number of baptisms, and in the midst of the deepest interest.

At the close of the morning service Brother Hall raised $4,700 for the new church, and the encouraging announcement was made that work on the edifice will commence at once. The site of the new building is on Jackson Boulevard, about three blocks from the old church, and the structure when completed will be one of the finest on the West Side. At present the congregation worships in the "Christian Tabernacle," a large hall at No. 928 W. Madison Street, the prin-

cipal business thoroughfare of the West Side, and a location most advantageous for attracting strangers. During the World's Fair we hope to welcome many visiting Disciples into our new home, and with them unite in worshiping the Bountiful Giver of every good and perfect gift.

JESSIE WILLIAMS.

Wherever Mr. Hall goes he stirs up the churches, attracts outsiders, and makes his influence felt for good. He is a firm believer in printer's ink, and always advertises his meetings thoroughly. The newspapers have been very kind to him, and he always appreciates their service.

At the close of his Chicago meetings, Mr. Hall and his singer went to Toronto, where they attracted much attention, and accomplished a great work for the church in that most beautiful and intellectual city of Canada. Returning to the States they continued their work for some time, until growing tired of being so much separated from their families, they decided to discontinue their field work for awhile at least. So at present writing Professor Hutto is teaching in Kansas, while Mr. Hall is pastor of the First Christian Church, at Decatur, Ill., one of the oldest and strongest congregations among his people. Since accepting this work a year ago, the church has increased over 300 in membership and has erected a magnificent tabernacle with a seating capacity of nearly 2,000. Here the evangelist-pastor preaches to vast audiences, and finds ample scope for the exercise of his splendid ability as an organizer as

well as a pulpiteer. Decatur is an attractive little city of some 25,000 inhabitants, and it is probable that its enterprising and appreciative citizens will be slow to release one from their midst who is capable of doing so much for God and humanity.

WAS JESUS DIVINE?

Matt. 22:42. "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?"

A few evenings ago, you remember, we circulated some "Believers' Cards" containing this statement: "I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and am willing to accept Him as my personal Saviour." Among the cards returned we found one with a signature, and then a remark, as follows: "I cannot say that I do believe this; and still I cannot say that I do not." If that individual is here tonight, and any others like him, it is my purpose to help them to reach a decision on this great question if I can.

I believe there are in the world honest doubters, and we ought to treat them respectfully if we can. There are men and women who are honest doubters about the Scriptures, about the divinity of Christ, and about Christianity. It is no disgrace to have honest doubts, but it is a disgrace to keep them. It is no disgrace to have bed-bugs, if they get into your house without your knowledge or consent, but it is a disgrace to keep them when there are so many easy ways to get rid of them. If doubts have gotten into your mind it is your business to examine the evidences of Christianity, the evidences of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the evidences of the inspiration of the Scriptures. I want to say right here if skeptics would honestly, fairly and unprejudicedly examine the Scriptures their honest doubts would soon take to themselves wings and fly away. I want to say further, that if

Jesus Christ was not divine, then the sooner we close this great Tabernacle and quit this meeting the better; if Jesus Christ is not divine, the sooner we begin to "eat, drink and be merry" the better, "for to-morrow we die" and that is the end of it; if Jesus Christ is not divine, then the sooner the church spires are torn down and the church buildings converted into saloons the better. It is a shame to have a mountain of superstitions and lies piled upon the world's conscience, as the gospel is being piled upon the world to-day, if there is no truth in it. Let us find a consistent principle somewhere and govern ourselves accordingly.

The Apostle Peter, one of the greatest preachers in history, said on one occasion, "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," than the name of Jesus Christ. Now, if Jesus Christ is not divine, of course we can't be saved. If Jesus Christ is not the Son of the Living God and all He claimed to be, then we are lost and that is all there is to it. Zoroaster, Confucius and Buddha cannot save us. All the philosophies, rules of ethics and speculations of the scholarly world cannot save us. Peter was right when he said that there was no name whereby we could have eternal life, except the name of Jesus, the Son of Mary. If the Son of Mary was not the only begotten Son of God, then, absolutely, there is no eternal life. Hence our subject this evening, "Was Jesus Divine?" is one of tremendous importance. We should examine it reverently, thoughtfully and as thoroughly as the hour will allow.

I would appeal first to the Scriptures; second to History; and third to intelligent conscience. And I think if we can get a decision from these three sources we ought to be well satisfied.

Some object to our appealing to the Bible, and say, "Go on and appeal to history and to intelligent conscience; but when you come to appealing to the Bible I cannot accept the argument, for I don't believe in the inspiration of the Bible. So I would rather you would not cite the Scriptures as authority or proof." I want to say that Mr. Renan, one of the most gifted skeptics in the world, and the author of one of the ablest works ever written on the life of Christ, makes 1781 quotations from Matthew, Mark and Luke alone, without once questioning their veracity. I want to say further, that Dr. Simon Greenleaf, the greatest writer on law and evidence in either continent,—than whom no greater perhaps has ever written,—felt it not beneath him to write a masterly and unanswerable work, entitled "An Examination of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice, with an Account of the Trial of Jesus." And Wm. E. Gladstone, England's greatest statesman, thought it not condescending, but rather a glorious privilege to write that celebrated book entitled "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture." This leader among his fellow men sat down thoughtfully, trustfully and cheerfully to the important work of investigating and defending the Holy Scriptures. So if you can't keep company with these, the most gifted minds, you might as well waive the whole question and go away to your idols of unbelief. The most brilliant intellects and the purest hearts in the world have accepted the Bible as divine; hence we appeal to the Scriptures with all confidence.

I shall not attempt to present *all* the Bible has to say on the divinity of Christ. It would take too long. A hundred sermons would not more than suffice to present all the evidence from the 66 books of the

Bible on this subject. I might, of course, go back to the very first book, and show how God made that promise to Eve, "The heel of thy seed shall bruise the serpent's head," which is generally admitted to be a Messianic prophecy. I might quote the promise to Abraham: "In thee and thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed." I might quote the repetition of this promise to Isaac and Jacob. I might turn over to Luke's genealogical table, and show that Jesus Christ descended from Abraham. I might quote the prophecies of David, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Daniel, and others. Some of them wrote more than 700 years before the Christian era. All of these inspired writers foretold the coming of Jesus. Their records declare the coming of the Eternal One. I might turn over to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and show how all these prophecies were fulfilled; how Jesus was born; how He rose to influence among the children of men; how He went about Galilee with His Disciples, teaching, preaching and healing; how He was betrayed and crucified; how He died and was buried; how He came forth from the tomb and after forty days ascended to heaven. I might dwell at length on all these interesting evidences. But I will simply confine myself to one book, the book of John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." From this one book I want to select the testimony of some of the greatest characters of all history. I have very much enjoyed studying the book of John recently, especially with reference to this subject. It abounds in irrefutable testimonies. Let us take them up one by one, and consider them carefully. They all attest the divinity of Christ.

Testimony number one:

John 1:1.—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." All

scholars admit that John referred here to the Lord Jesus Christ. And this beloved apostle, who spent over sixty years in the service of the Nazarene; who received the wonderful vision recorded in Revelation, when he was an outcast on the Island of Patmos; who wrote the three Epistles that bear his name; John, the holy patriarch of the ancient church, says: *He was divine, He was God.*

Testimony number two:

John 1:29.—"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" This is the testimony of John the Baptist, a man raised up of God to perform mighty work; one of the most important characters, and one of the greatest preachers in history (not the *greatest* preacher; Jesus was the greatest preacher, and the sermon on the mount the greatest sermon ever preached—and Paul was a greater preacher than John). He was a remarkable man who could go out into the wilderness and at the river side draw hundreds and thousands to hear him preach. There was such an outpouring to hear him that one of the sacred writers says: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan." A man clothed in a peculiar manner, who ate locusts and wild honey, and lived —no one knew where. Yet this man moved the multitudes, and his testimony is worthy of our attention. And he said: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" thus affirming that Jesus was divine.

Testimony number three:

John 1:41.— "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." This is the testimony of Andrew. As soon as he

found Jesus, so soon he believed him to be the promised One to Israel. And as soon as he had found Jesus he wanted others to know him, and he ran immediately to find his brother Simon, and said, "Come, we have found the Messiah." Andrew believed that Jesus was divine.

Testimony number four:

John 1:45.—"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Here we have the testimony of Philip—"We have found Jesus of Nazareth, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." His testimony is to this effect, that Jesus, the son of Joseph, was the one that God promised through Moses and through Isaiah, David, and all the Prophets; the one who was to come to save His people from their sins, and bring peace and joy upon the earth. Philip believed that Jesus, the son of Joseph, was the divine Son of God.

Testimony number five:

John 1:49.—"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." As soon as Philip found Jesus and believed on him he wanted some one else to believe—and herein is the great secret of enlarging the Kingdom; when we have found Christ, tell some one else! Philip ran to Nathanael, his friend, and said, "I have found the Messiah! I have found the Son of the Eternal!" "Who is it?" inquired Nathanael. "Jesus, the son of Joseph," answered Philip. "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" said Nathanael. Philip did not stop to argue, did not try to convert him; but said, "Come and see." He wanted to bring Nathanael to the Saviour; that would be enough. Oh yes! if we can get this poor, sinful,

wicked world to take but one glance at Jesus, that will be enough. But the eyes of the world are blind in sin, and it is hard to get men to look and live. Nathanael was skeptical at first; but he came and looked, and immediately believed that Jesus was divine, and said: "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." He was a good man and became a noted servant of the Lord.

Testimony number six:

Turn over to the 3rd Chapter of John.—Oh, wonderful book is this on the subject of the divinity of Christ!

John 3:2.—"The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: For no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." So said Nicodemus, who was not a common citizen, but one of the most prominent men of his age, a member of that august body known as the Sanhedrim. He desired to become a disciple of Jesus, not openly, but secretly. He came to Jesus and said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." Why? "Because no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." To do these works requires more than humanity; it requires divinity. Thus this great and learned man believed that Jesus was divine.

Testimony number seven:

John 4:29.—"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" So said the poor woman at the well in Samaria. The disciples had gone into the city to buy food, leaving their Master sitting there on the curb-stone. He was weary from much walking, and thought to rest until his followers returned. While he sat there a poor woman came from the field to draw water, and he de-

livered to her that wonderful sermon on the Water of Life. The woman listened spellbound. She believed a prophet had come from God; she believed He was the Messiah. She hastened to the city and told her acquaintances all He had said to her, and all He had done, and asked, "Is not this the Christ?" She believed that this wonderful man was the Redeemer, the Deliverer promised long centuries before to Israel.

Testimony number eight:

John 4:42.—"And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." So testified the citizens of Sychar. "We believe not because of thy saying—" Oh no, she was a poor sinful woman. She had had five husbands, and was not the wife of the man she was then living with; she was a woman of bad character. So they said, "We believe, not because of thy saying; but having heard Him ourselves we know that He is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." After seeing and hearing for themselves, they had not a doubt but that Jesus was divine. The Saviour remained at this place two days, and had a great and successful revival. It is probable that hundreds, and may be thousands, accepted the overtures of His mercy.

Testimony number nine.

John 6:67-69.—"Then Jesus said unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" This was after he had delivered that powerful sermon, in which he had told them that they must eat of His flesh and drink of His blood, if they would have eternal life; and the people had said, "This is a hard saying." They were not willing to make the sacrifices true Christian service demanded. And so the multitudes turned away. He

listened to their footfalls as they went back to their sins, went back to the things of this life, and then turning to His apostles He said, "Will ye also go away?" Hear their noble response: "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God." What Christ, Peter? Why, *that* Christ—the Christ promised in the prophecies of the sacred books. The Christ for whom the Jewish people had been looking many years. Was He a mere man, Peter? No. "The Son of the living God!" Peter believed with all his heart that Jesus was divine.

Go on now. Testimony number ten:

John 7:46.—"The officers answered, Never man spake like this man." You know the Jews despised Him. Why? Because He told them of their faults. He simply drove their sins right home to the heart. He punctured their consciences and they did not like it. People don't like to have their consciences punctured any better to-day then they did eighteen hundred years ago. So the Pharisees, you remember, and the chief priests, desired to kill Jesus, and sent men to arrest Him and bring Him to judgment. They went and heard Him speaking to the people. But instead of taking Him, like dutiful officers, they listened spellbound to his gracious words. With wonder and amazement they slunk back into the city. And when they came back, the priests and Pharisees said, "Where is he, why did you not bring him?" And they answered, "Oh, never man spake like this man!" Very good evidence that they believed him to be more than a man. They were assured that Jesus was the divine Son of the living God.

Go on now. Testimony number eleven:

John 9:30-33.—"The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." So said the blind man who had been healed of his infirmity by the Saviour. You remember that Jesus stooped down and spat upon the ground and made clay and anointed his eyes and said, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." And he went and washed and his sight came to him. He had never seen the light of day; he was born blind. The Jews would not believe that he had been born blind, until his parents said, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind." Then they called the blind man to them again, and said, "Give God the glory, for this man is a sinner." He said, "I don't know whether he is a sinner or not; but one thing I do know, that once I was blind and now I see." But they said, "This man is a sinner, he is a wicked man." Then the man that was blind argued with them, and finally closed the discussion by declaring, "If this man were not of God he could do nothing," showing that he believed him to be divine. And later on, he said to Jesus, "Lord, I believe."

Go on a little further. Testimony number twelve:

Jesus testifies of himself.—John 9:35-37.—"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" Jesus himself said, "I am the Son of God." Jesus is

the greatest character of all history, and certainly his evidence should be weighed with some consideration. A being of such marvelous power! His name for eighteen hundred years has swayed the hearts of millions. His impress is upon all civilization. To Him crowned heads and peasants alike do obeisance. What did this wonderful personage say concerning himself? "*I am divine.*"

Go on. Testimony number thirteen:

John 12:3.—"Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." Here is the story of one of the most beautiful deeds the sun ever looked down upon. This believing and trusting woman came in as the Master was reclining at the table and poured out the precious ointment on His feet. The odour of the ointment filled the room, and the fragrance of the deed has gone to the ends of the earth. As she stooped the waves of her long hair fell upon his feet, and with tender affection she wiped them with it. It was an act testifying very powerfully to the divinity of him to whom she rendered this precious service.

Go on. Testimony number fourteen:

John 12:12-13.—"On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." It was just a few days before the crucifixion when He rode into the City on the borrowed colt. It was expected that Jesus would proclaim himself the temporal King of Israel at the approaching Passover. The people came out in great numbers and witnessed his triumphal march into the

City of Jerusalem. There was great enthusiasm. Some took off their garments and threw them at his feet, and others broke off palm leaves and waved them in the air, and they cried, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name—" Of whom? A man? No. "Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh *in the name of the Lord.*" Such was the testimony of the multitude that cried out shortly afterwards, "Away with him," not understanding that his kingdom was spiritual.

Go on. Testimony number fifteen:

John 12:27-30.—"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An angel spake to him." But what was it—thunder? No. Was it an angel speaking to him? No. It was God's testimony that Jesus was divine. That is what it was. God himself testified to the divinity of the Son of Mary.

Go on. Take another testimony—number sixteen:

John 19: 4. —"Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know I find no fault in him." It was on the morning of the Saviour's trial and crucifixion. The multitude had assembled and were crying, "Away wth him! Crucify him, crucify him! Nail him to the tree! We have no king but Cæsar. —Away with him!" Then Pilate went back into his room and wrote a title to be put on the cross. And the Roman soldiers proceeded to scourge their prisoner. They laid on the lash thirty and nine times, till his flesh hung in shreds and the blood flowed in

pools at his feet. At last Pilate brought him forth and said, "Behold your King. Take him, and crucify him, for *I find no fault in him.* He is innocent!" He regarded him as a most remarkable character. And it appears from the earnest efforts he put forth to extricate him from the intrigues of the Jews that he regarded him as more than human.

Go on. Testimony number seventeen:

John 20:28-29.—"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are thay that have not seen, and yet have believed." You know that after the Saviour had risen from the grave he met ten of the Apostles in Jerusalem, but Thomas was absent, and when informed of the fact he would not believe that the Saviour had risen. He said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." But when Jesus came and the doubting apostle saw him, he said, "My Lord and my God!" He believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and that he was indeed divine. Never before in the world's history had one risen from the grave by his own power—never since; but Jesus by his own strength had arisen from the grave the conqueror of the unseen world. The only possible consistent explanation of the fact is that he was divine.

Thus we have in the Book of John these seventeen different testimonies, and every one agrees. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established," and here we have seventeen witnesses, representing some of the greatest personages in heaven and in earth, and all say that the Son of Mary was more than human. And most of them, if not all, believe him to be emphatically the divine Son of God.

Now "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son was he?" Was he not divine? I might close the book of John and make just a few quotations from other books of the Bible. I might quote the testimony of Judas, for instance, when he brought the thirty pieces of silver, for which he had betrayed his Lord, and threw them down at the feet of the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." I might quote the language of the Centurion at the foot of the cross, when the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and the earth quaked, and the graves were opened, and the dead came forth, and the noonday darkness was quickly banished by the bursting forth of the brilliant sun. Smiting his breast, this Roman officer exclaimed, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" But why go further? The whole Bible echoes and re-echoes with invincible proofs concerning the divinity of Jesus. And, oh, how glad I am that this is the case! For, as Professor Swing truly says, "If Christ be not divine, every impulse of the Christian world falls to a lower octave, and light and love and hope alike decline."

Now a few words concerning the testimony of history. Very little is necessary along this line of thought, for the world is full of indubitable evidence which only makes the declarations of the Bible appear stronger and brighter with each passing generation. A careful, candid study of the history of Christianity for the past eighteen hundred years is enough to convince any sane man, who is honest, that Jesus was divine. If he was not divine, one of the grandest miracles under the shining sun is the marvelous growth of his religion. An humble peasant himself, with but a few humble men for his followers, he was maligned, spat upon, and traduced. How that little company could spring up and grow till it became the

most powerful force in the world in the higher development of the human family, spreading its religion over the greater part of the globe, moving empires and kingdoms as no other influence has ever moved them, without the divinity of the leader, is beyond human ken.

The only way to account for the marvelous growth of the Christian religion from the following of a dozen individuals to a present adherency of over 400,000,000; the only way to account for its 60,000 martyrs; the only way to account for its transforming power for good over the sinful hearts of men, is by the fact that Jesus, the leader and founder of this religion, was divine. No other explanation will bear the searching light of common sense.

Zoroaster, the great Persian religious teacher, who it is supposed lived about twelve hundred years before Christ, gave his nation a fine code of morals. But what has Zoroastrianism ever done for the world? Throughout all Persia, the land of the great teacher, there is not a railroad. You cannot find a telephone there, or a telegraph; no marks of advanced civilization. The people of Persia are to-day very little, if any, in advance of the Persians of three thousand years ago. Why? Because the religion of Zoroaster lacked the essential element of a higer development —divinity. Zoroaster was a mere man. He had more than ten centuries the start of Jesus, but has long been distanced in the race.

Confucius, who it is supposed lived contemporary with Belshazzar, five hundred years before Christ, gave to poor China a narrow, bigoted, selfish religion, and the result is seen to-day in a nation noted for its lack of progress. No railroads, steam-boats, electric cars, and great steam presses in China, but on the other hand mountains of inexcusable ignorance, con-

temptible conservatism, and unbearable superstition. Confucius was a mere man.

Look over the world to-day; look at Mahomet, who secured millions of followers by false promises never fulfilled. He has nearly 200,000,000 followers to-day. But what has Mahometism done for the world? Arabia and Turkey are still in the darkness of superstition and the throes of unspeakable degradation. Mahomet was a mere man.

Look at the glittering cohorts of Alexander, Cæsar and Cyrus; but where are they to-day? Gone, forever gone. No more will the shout of their triumphs be heard, nor the tramp of their magnificent armies. They were mere men. But Jesus, who came from despised Nazareth, and fought not save with weapons of love, gave the world faith and hope, and to-day tens of thousands of church spires with ringing bells testify that He was divine.

"What think ye of Christ, whose son was he?" Let an intelligent conscience answer it, or let a learned Court answer it in the light of reason, in the light of testimony, in the light of Christianity. Jesus Christ was divine, or else He is the greatest impostor the world ever knew. For he claimed to be divine, and the angels of heaven testified that he was when they sang, "Peace on earth and good will toward men." Did they speak falsely? The greatest authorities of heaven and earth have testified that the humble Nazarene was the Son of God, was divine. If he is not divine, they are all mistaken, and there is nothing in Christianity, nothing in the religion of Jesus but error, nothing but false hopes, nothing but bitter disappointment and hopeless remorse. But at this the intelligent conscience revolts, so I declare to you this evening that the only logical conclusion, the only consistent answer to this question is, that Christ was

divine, that he was the only begotten Son of God, that he was the fulfillment of prophecy,—the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Prince of Peace, and the Saviour of mankind! Therefore the only right way to act is to accept him, love him, serve him. I leave the matter with you. You have been long hesitating, perhaps. But do not wait longer.

"Why do you wait, my brother?
Why do you tarry so long?
Your Saviour is waiting to give you
A place in his glorified throng."

If you have been putting this matter off, I beg of you to put it off no longer; decide now, either for or against Christ. If, after all this evidence, you still say, "I don't believe," the day will come, dear friend, after my voice is hushed, and all who sit here are laid away in the cold grave—the day will come, yonder Judgment Day, when you will say, upon bended knees, "I do believe." If you don't voluntarily confess Him *here*, you will *have* to confess Him *there*. So I beg of you take time by the forelock, acknowledge the divinity of Jesus, and be forever blessed. Stand up before the world and acknowledge His supremacy! Swing into line with the greatest intelligences of earth and heaven! Show by an acceptance of Christianity that you are the friend of truth and progress! Will you do it? God help you.

PRAYER.

Mark 14:38. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

These are the words of our Saviour spoken on the evening of his betrayal, and should be regarded with the greatest deference, because the circumstances under which they were delivered were among the saddest of his earth-life—just the evening before his crucifixion, just an hour or two before the hypocritical kiss of Judas, when he was compelled to surrender to the authorities from the Temple.

"Watch and pray."—I want to talk about prayer, a subject which I fear is not very well understood by the majority of Christians. Although there is very much said about it, although there is very much written about it, and although we occasionally sing "sweet hour of prayer," yet I feel that Christian people generally do not appreciate its wonderful significance as the power that moves the Lord.

Let us first discuss the question, What is Prayer? We will then observe that all mighty men have been men of prayer. Thirdly, we will talk about, How to pray, when to pray, and where to pray. Fourth—Some of the results of prayer. I trust a talk along this line will be helpful to every person present.

Mr. Moody says, "Those whose lives have made the deepest impression on this sin-cursed earth have been men and women of prayer." I am sure he is correct in this assertion. It is undoubtedly true that those who have made the deepest impression for

truth, goodness, and uprightness, have been persons "who waited much on the Lord." Prayer must be something of very great importance, for the Word of God is full of the subject. And a study of the lives of truly great men reveals the fact that they were praying men. A life of prayer has enabled many a noble character to leave "foot-prints on the sands of time" for good, and cause men to rise up and call them blessed.

What then is Prayer? A very simple question; one that it seems I need scarcely take time to discuss. Yet these simple questions are often more difficult and important than they at first appear. This is a practical question, and deserves a careful answer.

Is it delivering a grand and beautiful address to the Lord, flourishing a splendid array of rhetoric and eloquence? It would seem that was prayer, judging from the way many Christians do it. And not a few ministers seem to endeavor to speak to the Lord in a way to excite the greatest admiration of the listeners. Have you not frequently heard, as you were leaving the church, some one say, "Was not that a beautiful prayer Doctor So-and-So made?" or, "Wasn't that an eloquent prayer?" So the world has the impression that prayer is delivering a fine speech to the Lord. But it is not that. The Lord does not care so much for our grammar and rhetoric, nor the particular attitude of the body; but the spirit in which we approach him.

But what is prayer? The poet says:

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

This is very beautiful, but to my mind, Mr. Montgomery has not given us in these lines a complete

definition of prayer. It is more than that. It is possible to have a "sincere desire," and not have that desire gratified; but the Lord gratifies the sincere desire of the praying heart. It is possible to love, without our love being returned (a great many young men here have doubtless had that experience)! It is possible for me to ask favors, and not have them granted. But the Lord loves, and the Lord grants the favors we ask of him—possibly not that particular one, but if not that something infinitely better.

I have a definition of my own which I think is more satisfactory. It is in very few words, but it covers the whole ground. Hear it: PRAYER IS SWEET COMMUNION WITH GOD. Now when we desire a favor, we ask God for it and he grants us that favor. We talk the matter all over with our Heavenly Father, and make our requests known to Him with child-like confidence. And we are not disappointed. We find that God is the soul's complement. He recognizes our sincere desires and beneficently responds with the gifts we need. He hears our petition gladly. He enjoys our conversation. He enjoys our presence. He enjoys talking with us, and to us, and thus we have communion with our Maker; that is prayer.

I want to cite a few Scriptures on the subject: First, Mark 11:24.—"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Now note: The Lord does not say, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray believe, and *may-be* you will get them; possibly I will grant your request; *if I happen to feel like it*, or if the *notion* strikes me I will give you the blessing desired." He does not say, "Ask, and nine times out of ten you will get what you want." No! The Lord is not so indefinite in his promises as man. But he that asks, believing, receives. "And ye *shall have*

it," says the Word. No equivocation, no doubt; but YE SHALL HAVE IT. When you commune with the Lord, don't be afraid to ask Him for what you desire with full assurance. I would to God this spirit might take possession of all, all Christian men and women; that Christ's disciples everywhere might be stirred up to ask, in faith, great things of God. If so, such a wave of blessing would sweep over the church as has never yet been seen. Remember the promise, "Ye shall have." Spurgeon once said that "prayers are heard in heaven very much in proportion to our faith. Little faith will get very great mercies, but great faith still greater."

Second, John 16:23,24.—"And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Now how is that? Why, simply this: "Ask the Father *in my name*, and he will grant your request." This is one of the conditions of acceptable prayer. We are told to ask in the name of Jesus. Never ask in your own name; never ask in any man's name; never ask in an angel's name; never ask in a departed saint's name—as the Catholics do—for it will not avail. Never ask Jesus personally, nor the Holy Spirit personally. But ask God in the name of Christ.

I have sometimes heard people address their prayers to Jesus,—"O, Lord Jesus, do so-and-so, or give us so-and-so." But we should not do this. Jesus did not tell us to pray to Him, but to the Father. People sometimes address their petitions to the Holy Spirit,—"O, Holy Spirit, come down, etc." But we should never pray to the Holy Spirit. The Word of Truth does not so instruct us. But we should always pray to God in the name of Jesus. I must tell you the Mas-

ter does not want us to ignore his directions. No amount of piety will make up for wanton disobedience. If we really desire to please Christ, and the Holy Spirit, we should not address them personally, but address the Father, the great Head of the Godhead. And if we pray in the name of Jesus, we are promised an answer to our prayers. *In the name of Christ.* Oh, get "in the Name!" Be a believing, patient, obedient servant of Jesus. That is what being "in the name" means. Those who do not believe in Christ should not pray; they are not "in the name." Nor should those who, although they are not unbelievers, have not kept the commandments, and who, perhaps, think them non-essential, expect God to hear their prayers. You may be living up to your "honest convictions," but you are not "in the name of Christ" until you believe, and obey His laws; and God has not promised to hear anybody out of the name of His only Begotten Son.

Turning to Matt. 28:19, we learn what Christ meant by getting into His name. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." And in the last chapter of the Book of Luke, we have further information on this point: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached IN HIS NAME among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Turning to the 2nd chapter of the Book of Acts we read how the people repented and were baptized on the Day of Pentecost, thus getting *into the name* of Christ, and securing all the rights and privileges of Christian citizenship. And so if we want our prayers answered, we should lose no time in becoming penitent, baptized believers in the NAME OF CHRIST, and then, whatsoever we ask the Father, He will give us.

Third,—Matthew, 6th Chapter.—Luke informs us that the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." And He said, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. But thou when thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." And then the Saviour gave them an example of acceptable prayer,—this prayer is commonly spoken of as "The Lord's Prayer," but it is, more properly speaking, *The Disciple's Prayer.* "After this manner therefore," said he, "pray ye: "*Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*"

Ah! That is the way to pray. Commence by glorifying the name of the Lord; extol Him above all creation, both in heaven and in earth. Secondly:—Talk about the Lord's business—"Thy kindgom come." Then we come down to poor, weak self—"Give us bread;" "Forgive us;"and "Lead us not into temptation." Then we break forth once more in praise to God—"Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever!" But how often we pray for self first, self second, and self all the way through! "Lord bless *me*, remember *me*, give to *me*," from beginning to end. Now we should learn better from this blessed example which the Lord has given us. I love to hear some of our old preachers pray; some of those old veterans of the Cross who have been

preaching for half a cenutry or more—How they do glorify the name of the Living God! Their communion is one great, long period of praise. I think the Lord likes such prayers. We should be careful not to make self too obtrusive in our petitions. I would to God, every disciple of Christ the world over might repeat this prayer every day, if for no other purpose than to catch the spirit of true, acceptable communion with God.

Fourth:—1 Thessalonians, 5:17, 18.—"Pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." The great Apostle Paul says:—"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING." Yet Professor Atwater tells about a man over in Pennsylvania, a deacon in one of our churches, who does not believe in prayer; he does not think it necessary. He will pass the sacred emblems, he will take up the collection, and pose as a Christian; yet he does not believe in prayer. But that man will never get to heaven, I fear. I am glad there are not many like him among us. The Christian Church has been accused of not believing in prayer; but the accusation is without foundation. I think that every one of our more than six thousand preachers will say that it is utterly impossible for a Christian man to be saved without living a life of prayer. "PRAY WITHOUT CEASING," says Paul, and I think he means it. God means it, and Jesus Christ means it, and if you are not living a life of prayer, my brother, the best thing for you to do is to go into your closet, and kneeling before God, beg him to forgive you for past neglect, and promise Him, then and there, that you will live closer to Him in the future.

Once again:-I John 3:21, 22.—"Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him,

because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." Notice that precious promise: "*Whatsoever we ask we receive.*" Why? Because we have kept his commandments, and because we are in his confidence. The great God has pledged himself to hear the prayers of those who comply with his very simple conditions. So I want every member, as we enter this large tabernacle, with greater facilities for work, to take hold of this powerful lever that moves the all-powerful Father, and bear down upon it with all the strength of your nature. God promises to answer the prayers of every one who will live right, and do right, and ask right. Many ask and receive not because, as James says, they ask "amiss." (James 4:3.) If we expect God to hear us we should ask earnestly, unselfishly, expectantly, and submissively. And we must ask "in the name," with all that this implies. The Bible has many great lessons on prayer. But I will not consume time at present in quoting further.

I want to say now that all truly great and mighty characters in history have been men and women of prayer—all who have glorified the name of Christ; all who have helped to usher in the reign of righteousness; all who have done something worthy the name of humanity, have been men and women of prayer. The men and women who are moving the world for good to-day are praying men and women; it has ever been so, and ever will be so. I said all *truly great* men, are men of prayer. There is a difference between true greatness and mere notoriety, between greatness in God's eyes and greatness in man's eyes. With God greatness means goodness. Napoleon was great in man's eyes, but I fear not in God's eyes. With God the humblest man on earth is great if he is good.

Glance through the Bible and you will observe that heaven always blessed the men of prayer. As a rule those who did most prayed most.

Abel was a man of prayer.

And Abraham was a man who delighted in prayer. Everywhere he went he erected an altar. When he would come to a new place he would erect an altar and offer sacrifices; that was the way he prayed to God,—kill a young lamb, or a young bullock, and burn it before the Lord. And Abraham was so good and faithful that he was called the "friend of God."

We find that Jacob was a man of prayer. Coming back from the home of Laban—where he had lived twenty years—to see his old father, and to make peace with his brother Esau, he had some very troublesome compunctions of conscience. I imagine he was a little afraid to meet Esau. And then he had had a little quarrel with his father-in-law. Take it all in all he realized the need of prayer. So he wrestled all night long at Peniel. He prayed with all his heart; he poured out his soul unto God; he wrestled with the angel, and said, "I will not let thee go until thou bless me; I will hold to you—I will not release my grip—I will die in my tracks if need be —I WILL NOT LET THEE GO!" And so we should keep right on praying,—begging, entreating, imploring, until we get what we ask for. Jacob received the blessing, and his name was called Israel, "For as a prince," said the angel, "hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Hannah, one of the sweetest characters in the Bible, was mighty in prayer. She prayed for a son, and God answered her by giving her Samuel, one of the greatest of Old Testament worthies.

We find Elijah a living reality of the efficacy of prayer. At one time in answer to his prayers, the

rain was withheld for three years; and then, in answer to prayer, the rain descended. I like to read of the time Elijah prayed so earnestly on Mount Carmel. You remember the record says, "He cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, Go up now and look toward the sea." And the servant went, and ere long came back and said, "I don't see any signs of rain." And he told him to go again. So he went, and came back and said, "I don't see anything yet; the sky is as clear as crystal." "Go again, seven times," said Elijah. If Elijah had been like a great many modern Christians, he might have said, "It is no use; I might as well give it up; the Lord is not going to answer me." But he kept on praying until his servant had gone seven times. When he returned the seventh time he said, "Behold, there riseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." Ah! That was sign enough. And Elijah said, "Go now and tell the King to prepare his chariot, and drive rapidly for home, for we are going to have a great rain." And pretty soon the thunder and lightnings began to play, and the rain descended in torrents, all in answer to praying Elijah.

Elisha was a man mighty in prayer, and thus he was able to raise the Shunamite's son, multiply the widow's oil, heal Naaman the leper, and do other remarkable things in the name of Jehovah.

And Manasseh, although he had been a very wicked king, and was carried away captive into Babylon, in answer to prayer was restored again to his throne in Jerusalem, where he ceased not to glorify God as long as he lived.

Job, the man whose every blessing was turned against him, and again whose every curse was turned to blessing, was a man of prayer.

And "good old Daniel" was a man mighty in prayer. Three times every day he prayed, with his face turned towards Jerusalem. Thus was he saved from the lion's mouth, and from the fury of Babylon's king. In answer to prayer he was able to interpret the secrets of the great Nebuchadnezzar, and to read the handwriting on the wall when wicked Belshazzar was overthrown.

And coming on down to the New Testament, we find that all the men who moved God, in every instance, were men of prayer. Paul and Silas prayed at midnight in the Philippian jail. They were cast into prison for preaching Jesus, and their feet were fast in the stocks. But as they prayed and sang praises to God, the foundations of the prison were shaken, and the door was opened, and their bands were loosed. Paul was evidently one of the most prayerful men the world ever saw, and hence one of the greatest.

Stephen prayed while the Jews were stoning him, and the Lord took his spirit to heaven.

Peter was delivered from prison in answer to prayer. All the apostles and early disciples were mighty in prayer. Did you ever notice that they had been praying ten days before they were endowed with power from On High on the ever memorable Day of Pentecost?

Jesus was a man of prayer. All through His life we find Him praying. Although He was the divine Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, He felt it necessary again and again to pray. What a striking example to His followers! When He had a great work to do, He would commence that work with prayer. Sometimes after teaching all day, he would go up in the mountains at night to commune with the Father. If we have been working all day we often feel

too tired to pray; but Our Master seemed to feel that that was the time He needed most to pray. Before his greatest miracles, he would lift his eyes heavenward, and commune a few moments with God.

When He fed the Five Thousand He first prayed. When He raised Lazarus from the grave, He prayed. When He raised the daughter of Jairus, He prayed. When He ate with the two disciples at Emmaus, Luke says, "He took bread, and blessed it, and break, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him." He prayed on the cross—"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." And have you ever noticed the fact that He prayed at His baptism? Listen: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, *and praying*, the heaven was opened, etc." (Luke 3:21, 22.) It seems to me that of all the appropriate times in the world to pray, there are none more appropriate than at the hour of baptism, and the hour of death. And Jesus has set the example. He prayed on the Mount of Transfiguration, and he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Indeed his whole earth life was a life of prayer, his last words being, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." He lived and died communing with God. So ought we to do, for there is wonderful power and joy in prayer.

Glance at secular history and note the names of uninspired men who have moved the world for good. They have uniformly been men of prayer. I will mention only a few: General Gordon, one of the most celebrated of England's warrior chieftains, was a praying man. It is said that every morning, for half an hour, there might be seen a white handkerchief on the ground just outside his tent. And while that handkerchief was there, nobody was allowed to interrupt him, no matter how important his business.

Though a messenger from the Queen herself desired an immediate interview he must wait, for the General was at prayer.

General Havelock also was a man of prayer. It is said of him that if the hour for marching was set at six, he would arise at four, that he might have good time to commune with God before the arduous duties of the day.

Benjamin Franklin believed in prayer. The infidels sometimes claim him, but he it was who introduced the motion in the Colonial Congress that the deliberations of that important assembly should be opened with prayer. For days they had been toiling and toiling apparently to little purpose, trying to frame a code of laws for the thirteen Colonies. Finally, this great statesman arose and moved that they should petition God for His Blessing and assistance. And from that day to this, I believe, the deliberations of Congress have never been opened without prayer.

General Washington,—

"The first, the last, the best,
The Cincinnatus of the West,"

was not only an immersed believer in Christ, but he was an earnest believer in prayer. The winter that the Revolutionary army spent at Valley Forge was long and cold. The finances of the country were in a deplorable condition, and the prospects of American freedom were very gloomy indeed. The soldiers could be tracked by the blood from their bare and almost frozen feet. They were poorly fed, poorly clothed and poorly equipped every way for the great contest in which they were engaged. So one night, it is stated, Washington went out to a neighboring woodland, away from the camp, and kneeling down beneath a great tree, poured out his soul before God for the cause so near his patriotic heart. Who knows but

what that prayer had really more to do in throwing off the Mother-Yoke, than all the great speeches of Patrick Henry, or even the bayonets of our forefathers? The nation whose God is the Lord always wins in time, though the odds seem all against her at first.

It is related of Abraham Lincoln, with how much accuracy I cannot vouch, that before the great battle of Iuka, he was seen to take his Bible and go into a room by himself. When asked what he had been doing, he said, "I have been reading a chapter in the Bible and praying for our army." And when, after awhile, good news came,—the news of victory,—"Honest Abe" took his Bible and went into his room again, and when questioned once more as to what he had been doing, replied, "I was reading a chapter in the Bible and thanking God for our victory. Prayer and thanksgiving should always go together." Whether this incident is authoritative or not, it contains a very wholesome lesson for Christians. Lincoln was a believer in God, but not a member of any church. His father and mother, I am told, were members of the Christian Church. Every follower of Jesus should not only believe in prayer, but also in praise. He should be prompt to ask God for what we need, and just as prompt to thank him for the blessing when it comes. Prayer and praise should ever go hand in hand.

John Knox, who had all Scotland under his influence, was a man mighty in prayer One writer declares that "his prayers terrified tyrants." But I tell you there are a great many prayers offered to-day that don't scare anybody. The trouble lies in the fact that too many professing Christians are inconsistent. Men pray, "O Lord, remove the saloon curse," and they go right on and drop a ballot in favor of

license. "O, grant that righteousness and purity may reign from pole to pole," and they bring home various publications for their children to read that smell so much of the Bottomless Pit that the angels in heaven must blush and turn away for shame. If you want to terrify the devil, you must be mighty in prayer,—much in communion with God. Knox spent much time on his knees, and thus gained great strength from Heaven.

John Wesley, who turned over ten thousand people to Christ, was a praying man. He bathed all his efforts in trustful communion with God. Luther, Baxter, Whitefield, Edwards, Campbell, Stone, and indeed all the great reformers of history were men of prayer. Those who have moved the world for good, those who have lifted humanity Godward, and extended the Kingdom of Heaven, have been, without an exception, men and women who have counseled much with God.

In answer to the practical questions, How to pray? When to pray? and, Where to pray? I would say: —*pray meaningly; pray everywhere; pray always.* But now to be more specific I would add, talk to God in your prayers just as you would talk to a kind, loving, earthly parent. When your little child comes running and says, "Papa, I want so-and-so," he does not act as though he were afraid of you, does he? Why, no! But he affectionately and confidently says: "Won't you buy me this or that?" or "Won't you do me this little favor?" With earnest eyes he looks up into your face, fully expecting his requests to be granted. So ought we to look up into the face of our always kind and loving Heavenly Father, and make our wants known. He will hear us gladly and bless us abundantly. Oh, for more of this childlike confidence among Christians everywhere! "Except

ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." So pray earnestly and expectantly. Look into the dear Father's face lovingly and with full assurance. Childlike sincerity will bring rich reward.

We should pray always; not simply during the revival meeting, or on Sunday only. But we should live in the spirit of prayer. When Paul said, "Pray without ceasing," he did not mean that we should stay on our knees twenty-four hours in the day; of course there is such a thing as overdoing the matter —such a thing as allowing mere formality to take the place of genuine prayerfulness. Paul's idea was, *live in the spirit* of prayer—live in constant touch with God, so that at any time we can send to him the electrifying message of faith and hope and love, and the response will come much quicker than telegraphic wires could bring it. Living thus, we can send a message to heaven in a second, and receive an answer as quickly. "Father, help me!" and the help comes. Oh, live in the spirit of prayer! Whenever we take a railroad journey, we never know but the train will fly the track. How important then to appeal silently to God as we take our seat—"Father, bless me on this journey. If it be Thy will, grant that this train may safely reach its destination." We don't need to make a big stir, and push two or three persons out of the way to make room for us to get down on our knees and show all the people just how pious we are, but just send up the message to God, silently, gently, and trustfully; just open the heart to him in secret, and the Lord will hear and reward openly. There is too much of the old Pharisaical love of display among Christ's followers sometimes, I fear. Preachers have been known to enter the pulpit, kneel down and pray awhile in secret before the audience, when they

have just come through a solitary lane two miles long. But perhaps it was well for them to let the people see them pray, for otherwise they might never have suspected them to be men of prayer! At Toronto, Canada, I saw a man enter the room at one of my services and bow down in his pew for a little season of silent prayer before he could enjoy the sermon. But in our after-meeting the same person showed his inconsistency by repeating Mark 16:16 as follows: "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned," thus omitting the important phrase, "and be baptized." We should be consistent as well as pious if we would have God give attention to our petitions. And no display is necessary, but just a loving, confiding, hopeful yearning of the heart.

We ought always to pray *meaningly*. We should avoid an excessive use of words and trite phrases in our prayers. It becomes monotonous to say the least. I have heard individuals make about the same prayer in about the same words, using the same old threadbare expressions, perhaps a hundred times. I don't think the Lord wants us to fall into ruts. It is not necessary to always begin in the same way, always end the same way, always say "Amen" at the close of our petitions. That becomes formalistic. I am glad the Endeavor Society is setting the world a splendid example in the matter of short, pointed prayers. God looks at the heart, not at the language. He does not care how our desires are expressed. With him broken speech is just as acceptable as fine rhetoric and grammar, if the heart is right. "But don't you think people ought always to stand when praying?" inquires one; or, "Don't you think they ought always to kneel?" No. The particular attitude of the body is wholly immaterial,

only in public meetings we should all observe the same custom, whatever it is, for the sake of decency and order. But God has nowhere made it obligatory to stand or kneel, to sit or lie down. I think you can lay your head on your pillow and ask God to bless you, and He will hear and answer your prayer just as quickly as if you were kneeling or standing. But when worshiping in a public assembly, always do what the leader requests. If he asks you to stand, why, for goodness sake, *stand*, unless you have a lame back, or rheumatic limb, and can't stand. If he says kneel, why, *kneel*; don't be afraid that you will soil your clothes. If he says, "Shall we bow our heads?" don't sit back straight and stiff, as though you feared some one would think you a Christian! Whatever we do undertake, let us do it decently and orderly, as becometh the children of the Father.

We should always pray briefly in public. There should be *no long public prayers*; I do not make a single exception, at a funeral, at a Thanksgiving service, or at regular meetings. It is almost an inexcusable breach of duty for a person to make long-winded prayers in public now-a-days, and I am glad of it. Of all the good things the Christian Endeavorers have done (they have done many good things), perhaps there is nothing better than their inauguration of "sentence prayers." I would to God that all our public prayers were brief.

We had an old brother in Iowa who would pray thirty minutes by the watch. The boys dreaded to see him arise to pray.

Once I was invited to take part in a Union Thanksgiving service in Kansas. One of the ministers present was to read the President's Proclamation, another the Scriptural lesson, another was to offer the invocation, etc. The Presbyterian pastor was selected to make,

what his people called "The Long Prayer," and he did it well. I think he prayed about fifteen minutes. Before he got through the people were tired and began to be quite uneasy. Who will argue that such prayers are edifying? It looks too much like making an address to the Lord for the people to admire. Ask for what is wanted and then quit without any "vain repetitions." The longest prayer in the Bible can be read in about four minutes, the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple. (2 Chronicles, Chap. VI.) The Lord's Prayer, recorded in the 17th Chapter of John, is about the same length. If we want to make long prayers, let us go up into the mountain as our Saviour did, or into some secret chamber and pray all night. Long prayers are all right in their place; but their place is never in public.

The public prayers that have moved God the quickest have been short prayers. The publican smote upon his breast, and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." There was no "red tape" about that. He poured out his whole heart in one sentence.

But how about the Pharisee who stood on the street corner and made a long, beautiful prayer? Was his finely delivered petition answered?

When Peter was sinking in the water, he cried, "Lord save me: I perish!" He did not make a long prayer; there was no time for that; he would have drowned. But he asked for just what he wanted in the simplest and most earnest manner, and God gave him an acceptable answer.

The Syrophenician made her petition in very few words, but the Lord did what she desired,—she received her daughter whole.

All through the Old Testament and the New we find that many of the grandest prayers are those expressed in the fewest words. Mr. Moody very suggestively

observes that "those who pray most in public, pray least in secret." So be careful how you exhibit yourself in the prayer meeting!

We should take much time communing with God alone. If we bathe our hearts often in secret prayer, our faces will shine with the peace of God.

Speaking of long prayers, I am reminded of an incident which occurred in the South. A gentleman was traveling on horseback. Night came on, and he was far away from any town or public place where he could get entertainment. So he stopped at a little cabin, where an old colored man with his little family resided, and begged a night's lodging. The head of the family said kindly, "We will entertain you the best we can in our frugal way." After the traveler's horse had been cared for, and supper was ready, the host said, "Stranger, can you read?" The gentleman replied that he could. "Well," said the old colored man, "please read a chapter in the Bible for us, and I will lead in prayer; I am not a very good reader, but I am pow'ful in prayer." The gentleman read a chapter, and then they all knelt, and the old colored man began his petition. He commenced away back at the time when the Lord made man and placed him in the Garden of Eden. He told all about Adam and Eve, and how the serpent deceived them; then about Cain and Abel, and how Cain killed Abel; then he came on down to Methuselah, who lived 969 years; then he mentioned Enoch, who "was not, because God took him;" then he came down to Noah, and his sons —Shem, Ham and Japheth; he spoke of the flood, and how Noah was 120 years preaching and building the ark; and how the animals finally went in, two by two, and how the rain descended forty days and forty nights, and the waters were over the whole earth; how at last Noah sent out a dove, and how it came back

bearing a green twig; how after awhile they went out of the ark, and how Noah got drunk; he touched upon the fact that the people built a great tower, desiring to ascend thereon to heaven, and the Lord, not being pleased with this, made them speak in different tongues so they could not understand each other and had to quit the building. Waxing more and more earnest with each passing sentence, the poor old man was proceeding with the call of Abraham, etc., when the gentleman, who was by this time thoroughly wearied, poked the little boy in the side, anxious to obtain a little information concerning the progress of the evening's worship. Sambo was fast asleep, but was finally aroused sufficiently to give attention to the traveler's question, "Say, little fellow, is your father about through?" Sambo rubbed his eyes, and replied, "Where is he? when he gets to the Red Sea, he is just half through!"

I often hear prayers that remind me forcibly of this incident. No wonder many children dread the hour of family worship. It is not always the long prayers that tell for good, my brother; but prayer that comes from a heart overflowing with love and devotion. True affection can express itself in few words.

We ought to pray often and regularly; not merely once a week, or once a year. In some homes it is customary to have family worship during the long winter evenings, but omit it when the summer evenings come. I once heard of a pious old farmer who wanted to have family prayer every morning and evening, but when the spring work came on he felt that he hardly had time for it. But a happy thought occurred! He sat down one day and wrote out a very nice prayer. It had a splendid introduction, a good line of argument, and a nice conclusion. He put a

string through it, and hung it up at the head of his bed, and then every night upon retiring he would point to the prayer and say, "Lord, there's my sentiments;" and when he arose early in the morning, he would point again, once more declaring, "There's my sentiments," and hasten to his work!

Illustrating to what awkward lengths this disposition to save time at the expense of the Lord may lead one, Bro. S. B. Ross, of Iowa, once told me of a leading man in a certain village church, who believed in having family worship, but was so stingy he reluctantly took the necessary time for it. He was a good old Baptist brother, and he wanted to let his light shine, as several of his hired men were not Christians. So every morning while his men were eating breakfast he would read a chapter, as that would save time; and then, just as soon as they were done eating, he would say, "Let us pray," and they would all kneel around the table and the old gentleman would pray briefly, always concluding with "Amen—boys get out the horses!"

Oh, we are so salfish in our prayers. I would that we had more of God, more of Christ, more unselfishness in our petitions. There is too much of the spirit of the man who prayed, "Lord, bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife, us four and no more." How often we pray for ourselves, "Lord bless us! Give us health, success and happiness"—whilst we forget all about those suffering around us. May God help us not only to pray unselfishly, but to act accordingly. All prayer must be followed by consistent action on our part if we would see the answer desired.

"Since I began," said Doctor Payson, when a student, "to beg God's blessing on my studies, I have done more in one week than in the whole year before." So many say, "We haven't time, we haven't

time!" Friends, we have all the time there is! And we ought not to think of trying to get through our daily work without earnest, thoughtful communion with our Maker. Martin Luther was a very busy man. Doctor Bowers, in his great lecture on Luther, says that he wrote five works during the last thirty days of his life. And it is a well known fact that he gave the world a very good translation of the Bible, besides doing much other work that will make his name live throughout coming generations. Perhaps not one man in ten thousand to-day is so busy as Martin Luther was. And yet it is said of him that he once wrote a friend, saying, "I am so busy that I find it necessary to pray three hours every day in order to get along with my work."

"A great part of my time," said McCheyne, "is spent in getting my heart in tune for prayer. It is the link that connects earth with heaven."

I like practical poetry. And Herbert gave us an eminently practical couplet when he said:

> "Who goeth to bed and doth not pray,
> Maketh two nights of every day."

Oh, may we more and more get into the habit of incessant prayer, appealing to our Father for all we need, thanking Him for all we receive. Let us pray on and work on, fainting not. Pray for our church; pray for ourselves; pray for our neighbors, that they may be converted to Christ; pray for all men and for all good causes. And then let us work just as hard as we pray, for we must do our part if we would expect the Lord to bless us. And let us not give up if our prayers are not answered immediately. God knows what is best for us. Some of the most earnest prayers ever offered have gone unanswered,—that is, they were not answered the way we wanted them

answered. This has been my experience, and thank God I have lived to see that if He had answered my prayers according to my desire at the time, it would have been the worst thing He could have done for me! But the Father gave me something better in due time. So let us always pray in submission, for we have desires sometimes that ought not to be gratified. Jesus prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." When we pray for any blessing, it should be in this spirit: If it is Thy will, dear Father, grant Thy servant's request. And I believe that praying thus, ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, the Lord will give us just what we ask. It was Dr. Guthrie, I believe, who said, "Thousands of my prayers were answered almost instantly, while at other times the Lord withheld an answer for years." We may have a like experience, but let us keep on praying, always remembering that "the Lord doeth all things well."

You will pardon me if I give you here a personal reminiscence. I know that I am not as good a man as I ought to be. As the poet says:

"I know I am weak and sinful.
It comes to me more and more."

Yet, God has been very merciful to me all my life and has blessed me wonderfully. And when I am preaching about prayer, I always feel it a duty as well as a sweet privilege, to mention one of the most impressive experiences of my life, illustrating the necessity of entire submission to God if we would be heard at the throne of Grace.

A number of years ago we were living at Lincoln, Kansas, where I was pastor of the church. Our oldest boy, Paul, was then about fourteen months old, and he was teething—and you mothers know what a

critical period with little ones that is. One Saturday afternoon Little Paul went into terrible convulsions, and for two days they continued, one severe spasm following another with frightful frequency. We had the best reputed physician in the city, and some of the best nurses I have ever seen. Our neighbors and brethren of the church were very kind to us in our affliction. I think we never fully appreciated before how sweet and holy Christian fellowship is. For nearly two days our child lay at the point of death. On Sunday he had seemed a little better; but about nine o'clock Monday he had the worst convulsion that had yet attacked him. His little eyes were set and his limbs and forehead became so deathlike that one of the nurses said, "It is all over now," and she folded his little hands across his breast. For two days and nights wife and I prayed, "O God, spare our darling child; we *cannot* give him up,—we cannot do it—spare him to us!" Sometimes I would go into my study alone and pray; sometimes wife would be with me, and upon our knees together we would cry, "Father, spare our babe! Oh, we *cannot* give him up!" That was the way we had prayed, but it seemed that God would not hear us. And so on that Monday morning as our babe lay there unconscious, and I put my hand on his little marble brow, it seemed that the end had surely come. At last I said, "It is all right. We have kept him now longer than we were worthy to keep him; take him, Lord." Wife stood beside me with aching heart; but as we looked at our babe we said, "Take him, Lord; it is all right. Thy will be done." We gave him up freely—never, I think, did we give up anything we desired more freely. And it was not an hour before our child was better, and he is alive and well to-day—the light and joy of our home! The moment we brought ourselves

to the point of entire submission, where we could truly say and feel, "Thy will be done," that moment our prayers were answered.

Have your prayers gone unanswered, my friend? If so, perhaps you are not praying submissively; or you are not praying in the name of Christ. You must pray *Scripturally*. If so, God will send the answer. If not, do not be surprised if He withholds it. May these thoughts spur you to greater things; if so, the result no tongue can tell. Prayer lifts the world heavenward! Prayer lifts up the soul! Prayer enlarges the Kingdom of Christ! Prayer starts waves of righteousness rolling over earth's dominions! Prayer is the salvation of the church, of the family, of the home! Then keep on praying, my fellow-servant of the Lord. Keep on praying, for the more you ask for, the more will you receive. God longs to bless his children more and more abundantly. Live right and pray right, and the more powerful for good will you daily become, and the richer will be your Christian experience.

A lady friend of ours, a distinguished elocutionist, once argued with me against the necessity of prayer. She had been reading Major Whittle's book on "Answered Prayers." (I think myself this book overdoes the matter.) She said, "If God is a good God, and if He is kind to His children, why is it necessary for us to pray? Will He not give us what we need without our asking?" She was an Episcopalian, but had that peculiar belief about prayer. I do not think she had come in touch with Christ as she ought to have done. I tried to convince her that her ideas were incorrect. Several years passed, when to my surprise, just a few weeks ago, I received a letter from her saying, "Pray for my mother! Pray for my brother!" Several times the request was repeated.

(Her mother had lost her mind, and her brother was lying in a hospital at the point of death.) It is very easy to argue, and say, "I guess there is no need of praying," when all is well. But, oh, when the storms of this life overwhelm the soul; when sad afflictions come rolling over us one after another; and when it seems that the whole world is against us, it is then that we realize the necessity and power of prayer. It is very easy for the man who stands out of the church and gives his time and talent to the service of the devil to say there is no need of prayer. But when he comes down to the hour of death, naturally his soul looks heavenward. But if he has all his life trampled underfoot, willfully, the commandments of the Lord, in vain doth he look. God does not honor the prayer of the alien sinner until he manifests a willingness to believe and obey. You may pray the publican's prayer; but the Lord will not be merciful to you unless, like the publican, you are willing to do promptly what the Lord commands. Saul of Tarsus prayed three days and nights without food or drink at Damascus; but the Lord did not answer his prayers until he was brought in contact with Christ by complete belief and obedience. (See Acts 9: 1-18.) Hence I must say frankly that until you are willing to keep the commandments of the Bible and so come in contact with the blood of Christ, it is useless for you to pray, for otherwise your prayers will not go above your roof. But if you can pray in the spirit of Saul—"What wilt thou have me to do, Lord? I will do it gladly and promptly," then God will hear you.

And now is there an alien sinner here who wants the precious promises of Prayer? One who wants Christ's promise that his petitions will be heard and answered? If so, come and make the "good con-

fession." Come and obey God's precepts. Come and be one among his people. In the Master's blessed name, we beseech you, give God your heart!

THE GREATEST BOOK IN THE WORLD.

2 Tim. 2:15. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."

The Bible is the oldest book in the world; the Bible is the most interesting book in the world; the Bible is the most logical book in the world, and from every point of consideration THE GREATEST BOOK IN THE WORLD. Yet, notwithstanding all this, it is one of the most abused books under the shining sun. Yes, although it has the largest circulation of any book in the world; although it is printed in the greatest number of languages of any book in the world; and although it is in all respects the most precious book in the world, it is the most abused among the children of men.

How is it abused? In a thousand ways. It is abused by its enemies who deny its divinity, blaspheme the holy name of its Great Author, and make light of its sacred teachings. But worse than this, if possible, it is abused by its friends who unwittingly, or willfully misdivide, misinterpret, and misapply it, thus making it appear to thoughtless sinners a senseless mess of superstition and mysticism. Thousands of people nibble at the Bible like the fish that so many of them seem to be. They do not read it systematically and sensibly, as God intended it to be read. Then again, the Church of Rome ties it up in its monasteries and rectories, telling its poor, deluded subjects that they can't understand it, and that

the priests must read it and interpret it for them. Oh, this is a sight to make angels weep! If there is anything the people ought to read it is the Bible. It is so simple that the wayfaring man though quite ignorant can understand it, and be led by its glorious precepts and promises to a higher life.

If I can get the people to reading the Bible earnestly, I always look for good results in my protracted meetings, or revival meetings, whichever you choose to call them. I like the term "protracted" quite well, but I like the term "revival" better. We all need to be *revived.* We need to be refreshed, renewed, stirred up for greater things for God. We all need a revival of that joy and peace and hope which should ever characterize the children of God.

Mr. Moody defines a revival to be a "bringing forth from obscurity." I think this is a very good definition. We need to bring forth from its obscurity the latent energies of the church. We need to bring forth from its shell of indifference and carelessness, and fan into a roaring blaze of zeal, the talent and consecration which has lain dormant so long in the hearts of Christ's followers. And one of the best ways in the world to do this is to get everybody to studying the Bible, talking about it, discussing it, and even controverting over its great lessons.

But oh, how ignorant concerning God's Book so many of His children are! And this ignorance is confined to no particular locality. It is well night universal. This is all wrong. We ought all to be faithful students of the Bible, for it is the chart and compass by which we must be guided over the ocean of life to our haven of rest beyond.

Now when you turn to God's Word, how do you read it ? Don't you usually read a chapter here or

there, just as the book happens to open, one place just as good as another? Of course you do! No system, no rule, no method. That's the reason you don't understand it better. If I should ask you to turn with me to the first chapter of Nahum, I expect it would take some of you five minutes to find it. You would turn and turn and turn, looking here and there and everywhere, fumbling all through the Bible before you could find it. There is probably not one person here who knows whether the Book of Jude has one chapter or six—no; I will not say there is not *one* person; but probably there are not ten present who would know. And yet, this is God's Book! We treat our histories, works of fiction, compilations of poems, and even our newspapers better than we do the Bible. We should remember that it is not simply a matter of pastime or luxury to study God's Book. It is a matter of positive duty as well as privilege. Peter enjoins us to be "always ready to give a reason for the hope that is within us." How can we do this effectively unless we are well posted in the Scriptures?

It is a pity that there is so little Bible knowledge among professing Christians to-day. It seems to me that it is high time the attention of the people were turned to a more thorough study of the Bible, the Book which contains God's will. They study everything else under the heavens; they study the catechism, the creeds, the confession of faith, and the sermons of great preachers; but they do not study the Bible. They study the political outlook, the market reports, and the weather prophets' prognostications, but they do not study the Bible. And yet many of these self-same worthies are always ready to give you their opinion on a given doctrine, and are often very bold in attempting to uphold their notions by detached passages from the Word. If one finally drives

them to the wall in argument, then they will waive the whole matter by saying, "Oh, well, I'm not posted in the Scriptures as I ought to be." Sad admission, but true of the majority of church members the whole world over.

Oh, I wish people knew more about the Bible! If the masses knew more about the Bible, and loved it more—did not pretend to love it, but really loved it—it would not be difficult to turn hundreds, yes thousands, to Christ, where we now win only scores.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." You see we are not to read the Bible as a simple luxury; we are to *study* it. God did not give us this book simply for our entertainment, to read it when we felt like it and neglect it the balance of the time; but he has given us a positive command to study the Bible. The divine Master commanded the study of God's Word when He said to the Jews, as recorded in John 5:39, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." You remember on one occasion it was said that the people of Berea were "more noble than those of Thessalonica." Why? Because they "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily to see whether those things were so." (Acts 17:10-11.)

I would to God I could get all this audience to study the Word of God throughout this revival; not simply to read, but to search the Scriptures to see whether what I say is true or not. I don't care what you think of me personally; that concerns me very little. But I want you to know that the message I bear is true. Forget me, forget the occasion, but do not, I beseech you, forget the truth I speak to you. I beg of you to accept it, not because I speak

it, but because IT IS GOD'S WORD. Search the Scriptures,—examine, investigate, weigh and consider. The apostle Paul was writing to a young preacher when he used the words of our text—"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Now Timothy had been familiar with the Scriptures from a child. He had known them from his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice. But nevertheless, Paul says to him, "*Study!*"

Now the important question arises, How are we to study the scriptures? This is a question very much discussed. Preachers discuss it, the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor discusses it in their meetings, and the Young Men's Christian Association discusses it. One of the very best answers to the question I have ever heard, was at a ministerial institute in Iowa, some years ago. Bro. J. E. Denton, now of California, had a paper on "HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE." He said, "The best way to study the Bible, is to STUDY IT!" Good suggestion. There is much studying *about* the Bible now-a-days, but entirely too little studying of it.

How does a young man study law? Why, he reads Blackstone, the decisions of the higher courts, the Constitution, and the best works on Jurisprudence. He pores over the subject day after day, week after week, and year after year—Law, law, law is all he thinks about. Does he study a little trigonometry, a little geology, a little rhetoric, a little botany? No, not necessarily. He studies Law.

How does a young man study medicine? Why, he just *studies medicine.* He reads all the books he can get on medicine, reads the experiences of great physicians, goes to a Medical College, and works in the dissecting room. He studies anatomy, physiology

and hygiene week after week, and month after month. Finally he comes out a Doctor. While pursuing his course did he study astronomy, the higher classics, and theology? Oh, no. It is a good thing to have some knowledge of all these things, but the medical student does not dabble a little here and a little there in the various branches of education; but desiring to fit himself for the practice of medicine, he studies medicine.

So with any other profession. If we desire to fit ourselves for the practice of Christianity we must STUDY THE BIBLE. For this is God's great text-book on higher living. We must study the religion of Jesus—pore over the Book of God day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year; meditate upon it day and night; hide it in our hearts; make it a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our pathway; for it is the Word of Eternal Life. Study *under*, *above*, *around*, and *through* the Bible, so to speak. Learn all we can of it and about it. It would be very difficult for sinners to remain away from the church if professing Christians were filled to overflowing with the Word of the Lord and the Love of Christ—that love which suffereth long and is kind; which envieth not, and is not puffed up.

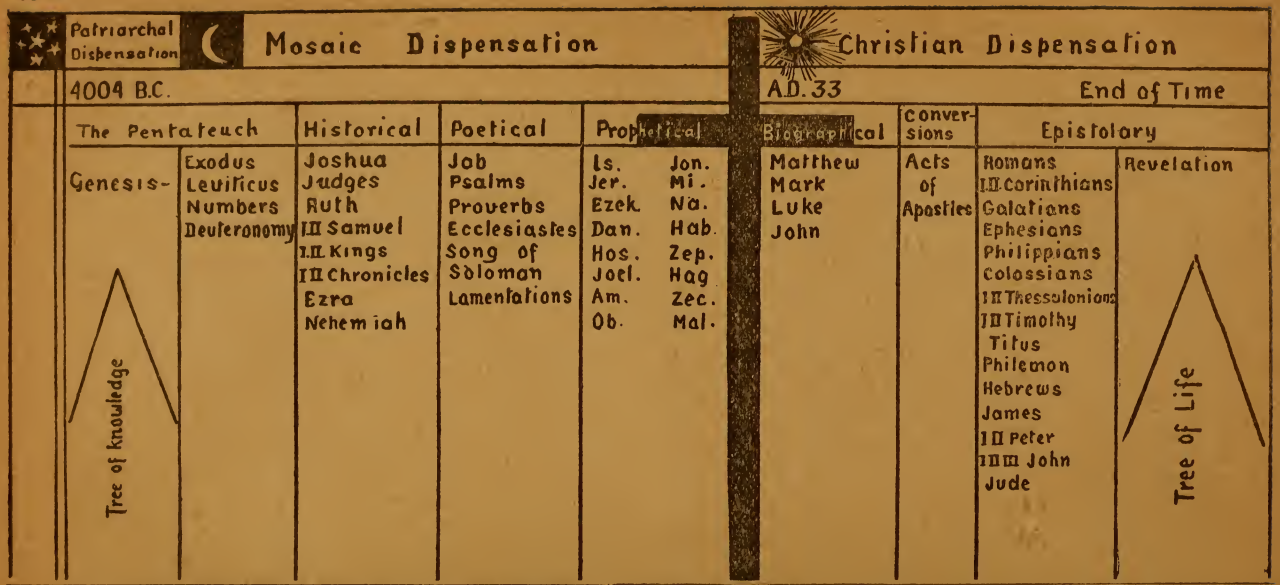
In order to study the Bible profitably we must rightly divide it. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing the word of truth.*" The end desired is to "show ourselves approved unto God." How can we succeed in this? By doing two things: first, rightly dividing and applying the Scriptures; and second, thus proving ourselves faithful workmen. When we have passed these two points we will have gained the approval of our Heavenly Father. But there are multitudes of professed Christians who have never

passed this first point. They fail in a consistent division of the Word, and so prove themselves bungling workmen who ought to be ashamed.

We should not fail to treat the Bible as we would any other book when we come to study it. It means what it says and we should govern our interpretations and applications of it accordingly. Some people think the Bible to be a very mysterious Book; they say they can't understand it. Where do they get that idea? From Romanism and a false Protestantism. The Romanist has the idea that the Bible is a dangerous thing for the masses. And it *is* dangerous —to Romanism. If the rank and file of the Catholic Church were allowed to read the Bible for themselves, Romanism would soon wane and fall. The constant effort of Romanism is to keep the masses subject to the priest by keeping them in ignorance of God's Word. A false Protestantism would likewise keep its subjects bound to creeds by making it appear the Bible is too deep for the common mind, and its interpretation must be left to learned doctors of divinity. But this is all wrong. God's written Word is so simple that a child can read it and understand it like any other book of history, or biography, or even like the daily newspaper. Take it as it is written, believing what it says, for it is simple, and yet all-comprehensive. It is the language of inspiration. God has not trifled with his children in his Word; but He has given us a plain, practical code of laws. If there is any one thing above another the world ought to thank the Christian Church for, it is the truth we have insisted upon so earnestly for seventy-five years, viz., *that the Bible is its own best interpreter.* By observing the following four simple rules, we can usually arrive very promptly at the meaning the sacred writer intended to convey: 1st, Who speaks?

2nd, To whom does he speak? 3rd, Under what dispensation? 4th, For what purpose? I am convinced that a faithful observance of this easy plan would remove nine-tenths of the theological blunders with which the creeds and confessions of the world are infested.

Now I venture to say that many of you when you go to read the Bible just dip in over here, or over there, wherever the book happens to open. You may think that is *studying* the Bible, but it is not. No wonder many professing Christians declare that they cannot get interested in reading the Scriptures. Of course not, when they go about it so childishly. Suppose one opens the book at the first chapter of First Chronicles and reads there a lot of those hard names: Adam, Seth, Enoch, Kenan, Malhalaleel, Jerel, Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, etc." He closes the book exclaiming: "Oh, the Bible is so dry!" Why, of course a genealogical table is rather dry for a starting place. But, my friend, if you would commence in the right place and read consistently and persistently, you would find the Bible the most interesting book in the world. I want you to try it. Commence at the first, read it systematically, methodically, and let its sacred words be applied to the age and people for which their Divine Author intended them. Read it as you read any other book. For instance, you pick up a United States History: What do you read first? Why, you read about the early discoveries by Columbus, the Cabots, and others; how they came over here and discovered the New World. Then you read the account of the founding of the Colonies; you become interested in the accounts of the settlement at Jamestown, St. Augustine, Plymouth Rock, etc. Thirdly, you study the history of the French and Indian wars,



The above diagram represents the Bible naturally divided. There are seven grand clusters of books, corresponding beautifully to the seven-pronged candlestick of the Ancient Tabernacle, and suggesting the Psalmist's declaration, "The entrance of Thy Word giveth light." At first revelation was limited, under the Patriarchs. Then brighter, under Moses. At last brilliant, under Christ,—thus the *starlight*, *moonlight*, and *sunlight* ages. The Cross is the mighty magnet in which all truth focalizes.

and then the Revolutionary war. Then you go on to the period of Reconciliation, the development of the States, and finally the Civil War, and Reconstruction. You don't go back to the old Articles of Confederation when you are under the Constitution. And in studying the Bible you should not go back to Leviticus and Deuteronomy, books written for one people, the Jews, and apply what you find there to us, Gentiles. This would be very careless workmanship, to say the least.

With the chart before us let us endeavor to rightly divide the Bible, applying each portion to the place in which it belongs. Notice—First is the Tree of Knowledge. Away back, six thousand years ago, God placed the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden, and Adam was told that of every tree of the garden he might eat, except the tree of Knowledge of good and evil. "You must not touch that tree," said the Creator. "You may eat of any or all of the other fruits of the garden, but not of that tree of Knowledge." But you know the sad story of the fall. Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and were driven from the garden. This was the beginning of time, or Four Thousand and Four years before Christ, according to accepted chronology.

We read the first five books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and find that they naturally constitute one division, or period of the Bible. We will find that the Bible naturally divides itself into seven periods, and each period may be beautifully and not inappropriately compared to the seven prongs on the golden candlestick in the ancient Tabernacle. First:

THE PENTATEUCH, OR THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.

The theological world, in discussing higher crit-

icism—so called—disagrees as to whether Moses wrote all of the first five books of the Bible. But I don't care whether Moses wrote five books or only three of them. I believe he wrote them all. But what's the difference whether he did or not? If he didn't some other great man of God did. A great deal of this "higher criticism" *is low down faith*, I fear. These books cover a period of 1492 years. The first of them, Genesis, contains an account of the creation. There has been a great deal said about God making the world in six days. The infidel says it could not have been done. Well, the Word does not say that God made the world in six literal days of twenty-four hours each. David says a thousand years is with the Lord as one day. Each of those days may have been a thousand, or a million years,—six long epochs or periods of time. The Bible and true science always agree. As far as science has yet gone in its investigations, it has never gone further than the first verse of the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This is the only exact and scientific account of the creation extant.

Then comes the history of the first man, Adam, and his wife, Eve, and his two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain slew his brother Abel and the Lord put a mark on him so that all would know that he was a murderer. I suppose some one will ask what kind of a mark it was. I don't know; but nothing worse, I guess, than some of the trade-marks I've seen in Chicago. At any rate the Lord marked him, and wherever he went there went the sad reminder of his sin.

Then came the old man, Methuselah, and that good, pure man, Enoch. Then came Noah with his ark, and the flood. Then the Tower of Babel, the

confusion of tongues, the call of Abraham, Jacob's descent into Egypt, and Joseph's exaltation. Of all these things we have an interesting account in the book of Genesis. These books contain the history of one family and its descendants. There might have been a great many other families upon the earth at the time of the creation of Adam and Eve. I don't believe there were; but there *might* have been. So far as God's will concerning humanity is concerned, however, Adam was the first man, and the Bible gives us the history of this man and his posterity. It is not claimed that the Bible is a complete history of the world, for it is not—does not purport to be. And yet it gives us multitudes of facts that no history of man could supply.

In Exodus we have an account of the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, and the sending of Moses to deliver them from the greedy hand of King Pharaoh. The ten plagues are described, the crossing of the Red Sea, and the forty years' wandering in the wilderness. Then we have an account of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. Moses was in the Mount forty days and forty nights, receiving from Jehovah those precepts and rules commonly known as the Law of Moses. And, by the way, it is the best Law, save the Law of Christ, the world has ever known. With all the boasted progress of the nations, the laws of the present day are, in many vital respects, much inferior to the Law of Moses.

We pass on through Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Numbers, and come to the second natural division of the Old Testament, which we term the

HISTORICAL DIVISION.

This period contains twelve books—Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I. and II. Samuel, I. and II. Kings, I. and II.

Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther—twelve books of history, a history of God's dealings, not so much with the Philistines, Perizzites, Hittites, Hivites, Moabites, and other people incidentally mentioned, but with His chosen people, the Children of Israel, the people through whom the Saviour of the world was to come. Away back in the Garden of Eden, the Lord said to Eve, "The heel of thy seed shall bruise the serpent's head." This is considered by commentators a prophecy of Christ. And God repeated it to Abraham and to Jacob, saying, "In thee and in thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed."

And so we have these twelve books of history. We learn from them that the Israelites were sometimes very close to God in service, and sometimes very far off. Sometimes they were very good, and sometimes very bad—very much like many of the Lord's servants these modern times. Some skeptics have a great deal to say about the views of these people, and the way they lived and acted; but they should remember that they lived several thousand years ago in the "moonlight age of the world," and they could not be expected to be as enlightened and highly developed as we who live in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, in the "Sunlight Age." The Pentateuch covers the "Starlight Age." The old patriarchs had received but little light comparatively, and I think some of them did wonderfully well. Look at Abraham, for instance; and Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and others. Their careers were remarkably free from imperfections considering the light they had.

Now we come to the third division, which we call the

POETICAL DIVISION.

This division or period contains six of the most beautiful poetical books—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. We have forty-two chapters in the book of Job. The hero of this book was a man of great sorrows and afflictions, all of which he bore with great patience. Down to this day "As patient as Job" is a very common expression, but a very uncommon occurrence.

The next poetical book comprises the Psalms of David and other sacred writers. There are one hundred and fifty of these selections, and you may search the world over, and you cannot find more beautiful rhetoric, more lofty and inspiring thought than you will find in this wonderful work.

Next come Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon, the wisest man the world has ever seen (except, of course, the God-man, Jesus). Then the Song of Solomon,—very beautiful—and the lamentations of Jeremiah—sad, but wholesome.

There is a fourth division in the old Testament,

THE PROPHETICAL.

There are sixteen books in this division, or period. The first, Isaiah, was written about seven hundred years before Christ, and the last, the book of Malachi, about four hundred years before the advent of John the Baptist. Besides these we have Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai and Zechariah. These sixteen books embrace what scholars term the major and minor prophets.

Isaiah prophesies concerning the reign of peace. He speaks of the time when the lion and the lamb should

lie down together, and when swords should be beaten into plough-shares, and spears into pruning hooks—the coming of the reign of arbitration, which is here to-day; not in its fullness, 'tis true, but still enough to fulfill prophecy, enough to verify the correctness of what these men taught hundreds of years before the coming of Christ. Many of these prophecies had a two-fold application, first to the Children of Israel, and secondly to us, the followers of Christ, or subjects of the New Covenant.

The description of the crucifixion of Christ in the 53d chapter of Isaiah is perhaps the most beautiful, as well as the most perfect account of this wonderful event to be found anywhere. And yet it was written seven centuries before the occurrence! But just as Isaiah prophesied, so Jesus lived, and so He died. Skeptics cannot satisfactorily account for this on any other basis than that of inspiration.

Going on to the New Testament, we have three natural divisions: First,

THE BIOGRAPHICAL DIVISION.

This division, or period, embraces Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These four books furnish quite complete biographical sketches of the Lord Jesus Christ. They tell us how he was born, a babe in the Bethlehem manger; how at twelve years of age He was in the temple, asking and answering questions, confounding the learned Doctors of the Sanhedrim; how He went down to the Jordon and was baptized, saying to John the Baptist, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness;" how He went about healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, raising the dead; how He gave us the Sermon on the Mount, the greatest sermon ever preached; and finally, how He was betrayed, tried before Pilate, and crucified; and

then, after lying in the grave three days, He arose from the dead, and went among His disciples again for forty days; when He ascended to the right hand of God, where He is to-day preparing a home for the "just made perfect." So we have the wonderfully interesting biographical sketches written by these four men. And I want to make this assertion:—There is not an honest skeptic living who can, unprejudicedly, sit down and read the sixteen Books of Prophecy, and then the four books of Biography, and not be a believer in Jesus of Nazareth.

The second natural division in the New Testament is the

BOOK OF CONVERSIONS.

This division or period embraces but one book, but it is a great book. Now shall I just go on rapidly, and not say much about this book lest I should hurt somebody's feelings? No; we must not ignore this book. I am aware that modern evangelists practically ignore the teachings and examples of the Book of Acts. But those who take the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice cannot afford to do so, for this Book was written by inspiration the same as the rest, and it tells us how men were made Christians under the preaching of Peter, James, John, Philip, and Paul. We are told in inspired language what to do in order to be saved. I would to God that every evangelist in the world, from Moody down to the least, when they go out to convert men, would turn them to the Book of Acts, and teach them just as God's chosen messengers did eighteen hundred years ago—tell them what Peter told them on the Day of Pentecost, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy

Spirit." You do not hear that verse quoted by Mr. Moody in his meetings when sinners inquire, "What shall we do to be saved?" You do not hear Mr. Sam Jones quote that verse, nor Mr. B. Fay Mills, when anxious inquirers cry out, "Oh, what shall we do?" Why? Because they do not believe that baptism is essential to forgiveness. But what did Peter say? "Repent and be baptized *unto* (the Revised Version has it)the remission of sins." But modern revivalists say that baptism is a controverted subject, and hence they prefer to leave it out of their meetings. But pray, what subject is not more or less controversial? And why be afraid of controversy? The truth has nothing to lose by it. I believe that God meant Acts 2:38 for all time, and for all pepole, and the evangelist who ignores that verse will have a big debt to settle with the Lord.

If part of the Bible is non-essential, then why is it not all non-essential? If faith is necessary to salvation, and if it is necessary to repent and to pray in order to be saved, then why is it not necessary to be baptized? The same authority commanded all. And if men fail to declare the whole truth, God will certainly hold them responsible. The Book of Acts is a history of conversions, and it should be made the principal text-book in all great revivals. We should endeavor always to keep close to God's pattern in everything, and especially in the great business of soul saving.

The third natural division of the New Testament we term,

THE EPISTOLARY DIVISION.

This division or period contains twenty-one Epistles, and the Book of Revelation.

Fourteen of the Epistles were written by Paul

(ascribing the Book of Hebrews to him),—one by James, two by Peter, three by John, one by Jude. What were these Books written for? They were written to tell Christians what to do. The Book of Acts tells sinners what to do in order to become Christians, and the twenty-one Epistles and the Book of Revelation tell Christians what to do to hold out faithful. "Why," says one, "I thought all you folks believed in was to put people under the water." Did you? Well, now listen; the Bible gives us one book telling people how to become Christians, and twenty-one books telling them how to live Christians. And we believe that baptism is necessary, for the Word of God so instructs us; but we also believe that if you don't live right after you are baptized, your baptism will not be worth a farthing at the Day of Judgment. You may baptize a man ten thousand times, in the most approved form of the ordinance, but if he does not live a consistent Christian life afterwards, it will not avail him anything. The twenty-one epistles, then, are books of tremendous importance to every follower of Jesus.

Then we have the Book of Revelation. Don't ask me to describe this Book. I have been a Christian only a little more than fourteen years. Ask some old father or mother in Israel, who has lived the Christian life fifty years—some one who for half a century has studied and lived by the precious promises of the Bible. Ask somebody like that, for, to old people, the Book of Revelation is very precious, because it tells of the Golden Streets of the New Jerusalem, and the Crystal Stream, and the Tree of Life, and all the glories of the "Over Yonder." It is a book full of warning and promise. We love it more and understand it better as we come nearer the Gates of Pearl.

So we have this collection of wonderful Books—Thirty-nine in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New, sixty-six in all; 1189 Chapters; 31,773 Verses; 773,693 words; and 3,586,483 letters; and from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation there is not one single contradiction or disharmony worthy of note! And yet these sixty-six Books were written by some thirty-six different men, and it was some sixteen hundred years between the time Moses wrote the first Book, and the beloved disciple John recorded his wonderful vision on the Isle of Patmos! The only way to satisfactorily account for these marvelous facts is to admit that the writers were inspired.

Oh, then, how reverently and carefully should we study God's Word! How cautious we should be lest we should fall into the error of "handling it deceitfully!" How particular we should be in dividing and applying it lest we direct some earnest soul wrongly, and so prove ourselves unworthy workmen.

When sinners ask what they must do to be saved, instead of turning over here to the Book of Acts and telling them what to do, a great many ministers turn over to the Old Testament books, or to the Epistles, and read something God never intended for the inquiring alien. What a shameful abuse of the Word is that! Then again there are a great many places where they teach that the Ten Commandments are still binding upon us who live this side of the Cross; and call the Sunday School, the "Sabbath School." Many preachers talk about "Sabbath services," etc. Let us talk right if we are going to talk. Why, the Sabbath was the seventh day of the week—what we call Saturday. And so you don't have any "Sabbath School," unless you are Seventh Day Baptists or Adventists, and I don't suppose you have

many of those theological freaks here in Nineteenth Century Chicago. Mr. Wilbur F. Crafts makes a great mistake in calling his otherwise excellent organization the "American Sabbath Union." What can we expect of the masses when our great leaders make such inexcusable blunders? Let us speak of such societies as "The American Lord's Day Union," or, if you like it better, "The American Sunday Union." We are not Jews. We are not under the Mosaic dispensation. We are living in the Christian era, and not away back yonder in the reign of Saul or Manasseh. The Ten Commandments, *as such*, are no more binding upon Christians than are the old Articles of Confederation upon the United States. Let us be consistent if we want sinners to be. In many Sunday Schools they teach the children the Fourth Commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Now you don't do that, do you? You keep the First Day of the week. And that is right, for we are told that Christ's disciples met upon the First Day of the Week to break bread. And this was the day our Saviour arose from the grave. Now don't suggest, like your bungling instructors, that "the day was changed." It was not "changed." Not one of the Ten Commandments was "changed." They were fulfilled, and a New Law was given in their place. Jesus said, "Not one jot or one tittle of the law (the law of Moses) shall pass away, till all be *fulfilled.*" When He died on the cross, was buried, arose from the dead, and forty days after ascended to heaven, they were all "fulfilled," and on the Day of Pentecost they were laid out of the way forever and a New Law was given. The *spirit* of the Ten Commandments was incorporated in the New Law. But as our country is not now under the Articles of Confederation, but under the Constitution of the United States, so we are not under the Old Testament, but under the New.

If we want to convert sinners we ought to be able to turn quickly to the right place. If working with an infidel, turn to the prophecies, and to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; if with a believer, who is not yet converted, turn to the Acts of the Apostles and read the commandments; if pleading with a wayward Christian, turn to the Epistles to learn how to live; if you who are trying to be faithful wish to encourage each other, turn to the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, or the Book of Revelation. We are not in the comparative darkness of the Starlight Age, nor in the dim light of the Moonlight Age; but we are living in the glorious Sunlight Age with Christ the Great Central Thought; let us govern ourselves accordingly. Let Christ stand out in bold relief; let the gospel run and be glorified; let the hearts of men turn to the Infinite!

In studying God's Word don't pick out a little here and a little there, without regard to the design of the passage. Don't get a little doctrinal idea into your head and then run to the Bible to prove it. Don't turn over to Ezekiel 36:25, for instance, and imagine the Prophet is speaking to you. Don't do that. But first inquire, Who is speaking? Answer: the Prophet Ezekiel. Second: To whom is he speaking? To the Children of Israel. Third: Under what Dispensation? The Mosaic. And fourth: For what purpose? To show them how God was going to bring them back into his service, cleanse them from their sins, and cause them to rejoice as in former days. Some preachers use the text in trying to prove that sprinkling for baptism is right. But anybody who will use those four simple rules ought to see with half an eye that the sacred writer did not have that subject in mind any more than the modern questions of free trade or protection. A minister who is guilty of such

exegesis is a very unsafe religious guide, to say the least.

No, don't pick out a little here and a little there and patch it all together in order to establish some pet hobby. You can prove anything in that way, but it is a very wicked way. I heard a story illustrating the ridiculousness of this method of using the Bible: There was a good old Professor who always read a chapter to his students every morning. One day the boys turned to the old instructor's place and pasted two leaves together, and the next morning at worship he read at the bottom of the page, "And God made man;"—turning over he continued,—"300 cubits long." He took off his glasses and wiped them and looked again, and he said, "Children, this is very strange; but God says it, and whatever God says is right. The works of the Lord are indeed marvelous."

That is the way the creeds are made,—one thing has been taken out of the Bible here, and another there, and all patched up together, till we have to-day hundreds of different creeds, and their supporters say, "They are all from the Bible." Well, if they are from the Bible, put them back where they belong! Detached truths often become the most dangerous falsehoods.

By using the Bible as the creed-makers do, I can prove almost anything from it. You have heard the story of Lorenzo Dow, perhaps, who traveled extensively over the South and East some decades ago. He was a good but very eccentric preacher. In his days the women wore "top-nots." I cannot describe the article; it was a way they had of fixing their hair,—before, or behind, or some way—I don't know just how. At any rate Lorenzo didn't like the style, and concluded that he wanted to preach a sermon against it. So he looked through his Bible for a text (you

know everybody must have a text); he looked everywhere, but could not find anythig about "top-nots," and he was at a loss what to do. At last he found what he wanted. Over in Luke where the Saviour was foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem he found this expression: "Let him who is on the house-top not come down." Ah, thought Lorenzo, that will do very well—"*Top-not come down!*"

There is too much of this detached text-taking business among ministers to-day. They want to preach something that they can't find a plain "Thus saith the Lord" for, and so they take out a verse here, and one there, and patch them together, and so compel Scriptural warrants. Abusing the Bible in that way, I can prove that it is right to commit suicide. Yes, I can! I can prove that you ought to go and hang yourself. Listen—Over here in one place we read, "And Judas went out and hanged himself," and in another,—"Go thou and do likewise," and in another place we read, "What thou doest do quickly." Now that is the way men prove a great many things, and thus make the Bible appear so mysterious that many poor souls decide that they never can understand it. That is the way we get Universalism and Unitarianism and Episcopalianism and all the other isms of the present age. Theologians have hashed up the Word of God, not dividing it aright, and hence not applying it in the way it ought to be applied.

God gave us the Bible to use, not to abuse. And He wants us to use it right. But it is amazing how many wrong uses are made of the Bible. Why, I have often known of families making little use of the big Bible except as an organ stool! And in some places I have opened the Bible and discovered a great provision of four-leafed clovers, or a faded rose that some girl's lover had picked for her, and she had put

in the Bible for safe keeping, thus using the sacred Book as a kind of museum and pressing machine combined! I heard of a thief who went into a house to steal, and accidentally discovered a ten dollar bill in the family Bible. It had been put there for safe keeping, the head of the family evidently thinking that nobody would ever look in the Bible.—O, no! I tell you chattel mortgages, promissory notes and ten dollar bills would be very safe in the sitting-room Bible in a great many families.

I remember visiting a well-to-do friend, in one of our States, some years ago. He lived in a fine, big house, and was one of the prominent men in the town. When I arrived the folks were all away. I amused myself as best I could for awhile, and finally I thought I would look around and see if I could find a Bible. My friend was a prominent man in the Church, an elder, I believe, and so, of course, I anticipated no trouble in finding a copy of the Word. And I looked on the center-table (everybody ought to have a Bible on the center-table); and I looked on the organ; and I looked in the book-case, and I don't remember how many places I did look; but found no Bible. I found his lodge magazines, newspapers, etc., but no Bible. Finally I looked on top of the secretary, and *Eureka!* There it was. I took it down and went to the light, and now listen! I will venture that with this index finger, I could have written in the dust with which that Christian man's Bible was covered the awful word, DAMNATION!

Oh, use the Bible, and use it right. God means you to use it. Use it as the most precious book under heaven. Use it as the chart and compass which was intended by your Creator to guide you over the sea of life, and land you at last at the port of eternal rest. That is the right way to use the Bible.

I love its wholesome precepts, precious promises. Well do I remember when I started away to school from my old home. When I reached the University and went up to my room in the dormitory, I locked the door, and began to unpack my trunk. Then the tears began to roll down my face, and I wanted to go back to mother, and father, and sisters. I had never been away from my loved ones so far before, and I was "homesick"—the most miserable feeling in the world! But I knew this would never do. So I took out my books, and hung up my clothes. Deep down in my trunk I found a little package,—"What was that?" thought I. I did't remember possessing any such package. But mother had packed my trunk, and maybe she put it in to surprise me. Sure enough! With trembling hands and fast beating heart I opened it. It was marked, "A present from Mother." And what do you think it was? A little Bible. It was a cheap little Bible,—didn't cost more than a dollar. But on the fly-leaf, in mother's hand, was written these words:—

"Presented to George F. Hall by his mother, Mary J. Hall." And then in father's hand appeared the following lines —

"As you go forth, my son, in this life,
'Midst sorrows and trials, midst troubles and strife,
Let this Book be your guide; and never omit
To search for the treasures contained in it."

I am not very well off in this world's goods (yet thanks to kind Christian friends, I have never been allowed to want since I entered the ministry), but I say to you to-night, dear friends, that there is not money enough in all the Banks of Chicago to buy that little book. Mother is Over Yonder now, within the "gates of pearl." Father is getting old and will soon take his departure to be with her. But that hand-

writing remains, and the fragrance of their sweet, Christian lives, and when I look at that precious book a train of hallowed thoughts comes sweeping through my soul, worth more than gold or stocks.

Oh, wonderful Book is the Bible! The longest telegram ever sent was a message embracing the whole New Testament. It was wired from New York to Chicago when the New Version first appeared, a few years ago, and published in one of your morning papers. Oh, wonderful Book is the Bible! It has been translated into over three hundred different languages. There are over two hundred million copies in circulation. Great printing presses are running constantly at lightning speed to supply the ever increasing demand. A century ago the great French skeptic, Voltaire, prophesied that in one hundred years the Bible would not be read any more than a last year's almanac. But the very room where he wrote has since been used as a Bible Repository, and the same press that printed his blasphemies has since been used in printing the Word of God.

It is said that when Sir Walter Scott was dying, he asked his son to read to him. "What shall I read, father?" said the son. The great novelist had written Ivanhoe, the Waverly Novels, and other world-famous books, and his son, perhaps, thought that his father might want to hear something read from one of his own choice works. But the great man said, "What Book, my boy? Why, there is *but one book,—the Bible.*"

When Lord Stanley first crossed Africa, he was 999 days on his journey. It is said that he had started with a goodly number of books, but soon found that owing to the burdened condition of his men, he must throw away all unnecessary luggage. He looked over his books, and reluctantly decided to leave behind

all but three—Lord Bacon's Essays, Shakespeare, and the Bible. He went on farther and farther into the blackness of that region, and as his men dropped off one by one, he saw that he must throw away every pound of luggage he could possibly do without. So he left behind Bacon's Essays, and carried on Shakespeare and the Bible (and it is said by critics that Shakespeare, the *ultimatum* of literature, is sixty per cent Bible). As he went on farther and farther into the dark jungles of Central Africa, he saw that he must let one of the books go. So with tear-dimmed eyes, he dropped Shakespeare, but carried the Bible on to the mouth of the Congo, where to-day there is growing up a great Christian nation. When Commodore Perry made peace with Japan, it is said that he took the "stars and stripes"—most beautiful and powerful of national banners—and spreading it upon the capstan of his vessel he laid an open Bible there and sailed into port and accomplished his important mission without one drop of blood being shed.

Ah, the Bible is the book with which to settle difficulties. It is the book of reconciliation between man and man, and between man and God. Read the Bible! Study it with the determination strongly fixed to "show thyself approved." And when you find out God's will, Do It. Don't *partly* do it; don't try to do it in your own way; but do it the way God tells you to do it, and you shall have life eternal.

FAITH.

Romans 5:1. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Also Hebrews 11:6. "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

The subject of faith occupies a very large part of the New Testament Scriptures. No wonder that it does, because it is one of the most important subjects upon which God has ever written to his children. It occupies a very large place in the scheme of human redemption outlined by our Lord Jesus Christ; hence it behooves us to study it very carefully that we may make no mistakes.

I have selected two texts, both of which emphasize the importance of the subject. In the first Paul asserts that we are justified by faith; in the second he declares that we must have faith in order to please God. We may have good works; we may be very earnest; we may be moral; we may be very pure and upright; we may be number-one citizens; but if we haven't faith, we cannot be justified, and cannot please God.

When we realize that we are all sinners, and have come short of the glory of God; that in our present

condition we are lost; and that salvation can only be had through justification, and justification can only be had through faith, we begin to realize something of the vastness of this old, yet ever new, subject. Let us study it to-night, therefore, praying meanwhile that God may enlarge our hearts in willingness to accept His truth.

Let us consider three questions:—

1st. What is faith?

2nd. How to get it.

3rd. What to do with it when we do get it.

Here we have the old English style of three heads, you know, and a careful consideration of the same ought to enlighten us all.

Sometimes I use a blackboard, and just write across it, "WHAT IS FAITH?" It is a simple question, yet one that many cannot answer scripturally. We sometimes sing that sweet old hymn—

> "My faith looks up to thee,
> Thou Lamb of Calvary."

We write about faith. We pray about faith. We talk about faith. We say, "Oh, we ought to have more faith." But what do we really mean by it? You perhaps remember that I said at the beginning of these meetings the great need of the Church of to-day was more faith. In this I think most Christian workers are agreed. But do we really understand what is meant by more faith?

Now where shall we go to answer the questions just propounded? Shall we go to some human creed? No! Shall we go to some discipline man has made? No! Man is fallible; his disciplines and creeds might be incorrect. If comparatively right for this generation, they might be all out of date, and have to be REVISED for the next. We want something for all

time. So let us go to the Bible first, last and all the way. The Bible should ever be our guide—the first and last appeal of the child of God. The most brilliant minds of the world have accepted the Scriptures as inspired of God. There are some four hundred millions of professed Christians now living who accept the Bible as their standard of belief and practice. So with great confidence I turn to these sacred pages for instruction on this subject.

Paul, what is faith? Tell us. Hebrew 11:1.—

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Thus declares the great Apostle to the Gentiles—"The substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen." Ah! yes. We have never seen the New Jerusalem, have we? No. Yet there is such a place? Yes. Very well, that is "the substance of things hoped for." We have never seen the Eternal King on his throne; we have never seen the Lord Jesus sitting at the right hand of Jehovah; we have never seen the millions of the redeemed praising the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, have we? No. These things have never been seen by human eyes except in vision. We have never seen the golden streets; we have never seen the tree of life; we have never seen the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal? No. Yet these things exist? Yes. These are the "substance of things hoped for." How do we know? We have the "evidence" that God has given. That is what Paul means by "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen."

Eliza Cook says—

"Faith is the subtle chain
Which binds us to the Infinite; the voice
Of a deep life within, that will remain
Until we crowd it thence."

Mr. Bailey says, "Faith is a higher faculty than reason."

But I fear the average student will not understand these definitions. So I shall give one of my own. It is a simple definition, and yet I think all-comprehensive. FAITH IS IMPLICIT CONFIDENCE IN GOD. That is all; simply implicit confidence in God, taking God at his word, without doubt, without fear, without wavering; immediate and absolute surrender of self to him with childlike confidence and trust; that is faith. Just as the little child looks up into papa's face and believes everything he says to be true, and that everything he does is right, and from his innermost heart has unbounded confidence in everything that papa says or does, so the child of God looks up into the Father's face with faith and says, "Thou doest all things well."

We cannot understand everything God has given us in his Book of Truth; we cannot understand the cross in its fullness; we cannot wholly comprehend the scheme of human redemption as outlined by our Lord. But we know that "He doeth all things well." That is faith, without which none can please God.

I recall a very pretty story illustrating faith. A little child at play remarked concerning something, "This is so-and-so." "Well," said her uncle, who had overheard the little one, "how do you know?" "Why, because mamma says it is." "But mamma may be mistaken." "No," replied the trustful little one, "mamma is not mistaken; she says it is so, and it is." "But," persisted the uncle, "maybe mamma is fooling you; or possibly she thinks it is so, but has been incorrectly informed." But the little one could not be shaken—"No, Uncle; if mamma says it is so, it *is* so, whether it is so or not!"

What refreshing confidence! What simple faith! In this age of higher criticism—so called—we need

more of such unshaken assurance. Why, I know a preacher who once declared three-fourths of the Bible to be fiction. This is a doubting age. Many pretended scholars say that much of the Holy Word is speculative, or fictitious, or allegorical, or something—not true at all. And they put in their time trying to explain God's truths away, and bolster up their infidel theories. So I like the little girl's definition of faith. It may not be very philosophical, but it is eminently practical. I wish more people would believe that if the Father has spoken, IT IS SO! I KNOW IT IS TRUE! I HAVE IMPLICIT CONFIDENCE IN GOD! No matter whether you understand everything or not. Trust God anyhow. Paul said, "Great is the mystery of godliness." He could not understand it; but he believed. Great is the mystery of faith; we cannot comprehend it in all its proportions. But let us look up into our Father's face and trust Him, serve Him, believe Him, and, in due time, He will change our faith into glad fruition and place upon our heads the crown of life eternal.

Did you ever try to consider that we could not do anything without faith? You know Chicago would not be standing here to-day, if it were not for faith. In forty-eight hours, I doubt not, every building in this great city would be razed to the ground, but for faith. There is not a single home in Chicago where there would not be ruin and sorrow within twenty-four hours if all faith should be suddenly taken away. If business men had no faith it would be impossible to carry on trade. You see the merchant must have faith in his banker, and the banker must have faith in his depositors. In the professions, the teacher must have faith in his pupil, and the pupil must have faith in his teacher. The pupil takes a great deal for granted. Tell the little boy "once one

is one, four times one is four"—and so on. He does not understand it perhaps; but his teacher says it is so, and he accepts it accordingly. So Mr. Bailey was right when he said that "faith is a higher faculty than reason." Through faith we approach reason. The world could stand without reason, perhaps, but it could not stand without faith.

Take it in the home; you know we must have domestic faith. The husband must have faith in the wife, and the wife in the husband, or else there can be no felicity there. The parent must have faith in his child, and the child in his parent. Faith makes the home happy.

So we must have all these faiths—domestic faith, professional faith, business faith, and religious faith. Yes, we must have it; for the world could not run without it. Paul says, "We walk by faith," and he is right. Every step forward through life is a step of faith. Every turn on the highway of life is a turn of faith. When you take the train for a little trip, you have faith in the engineer, and you have faith in the conductor. You have faith that the ties are not rotten, and that the bridges are strong. So, in faith, you ride on safely to New York, or wherever you are going. When you put on your coat and hat, and umbrella in hand started to church this evening, you did not know but what some thief would jump out of a dark alley and kill you, but you did not think there was anybody foolish enough to molest you, as you knew very well that you left what little money you had at home! So you see you walked over here to the Tabernacle by faith, didn't you? Of course you did. So it is all through life. Paul never said a truer thing than that—"We walk by faith." Every step we take on the way from the cradle to the grave is taken by faith. Hence the great Apostle spake pertinently

when he declared that "without faith it is impossible to please God." If we cannot please each other without faith, much less can we please our Creator without that implicit confidence which He rightly demands. Then let us ever look up to him trustingly, with unfaltering confidence and complete self-surrender, for this is that faith without which there is no justification.

And now we come to the second division of our analysis to-night, How to get it.

If we must have faith, if there is no salvation without it, then it is of great importance that we learn how to get it. Perhaps the best way to answer this question is to first tell how *not* to get it,—how we can't get it if we try—and then we can answer the question affirmatively in a more satisfactory manner. We have to come up on the negative side of these questions sometimes. I remember when I was a little boy, we had a splendid nag that was blind in one eye. She ran in a large pasture much of the time, and thus grew a little too wild for practical purposes. When we wanted to catch her we always had a time, for she preferred grazing to being ridden to town. It didn't make any difference how many pretty names we called her, nor how many bundles of oats we shook at her, she wouldn't come. I finally discovered a sure way to catch her. In my bare feet I would quietly but quickly slip up to her on the blind side, and then suddenly put the bridle on, when lo! Miss "Nellie" was mine. That is the way we have to do with theology sometimes, approach it from the "blind side."

There is much foolishness in modern theology on the question of faith-getting. I am persuaded that very much of what the preachers are telling the people on this subject is absolutely false. I do not say

they do it willfully. Perhaps most of them do it ignorantly. But at any rate it is done, and the cause of true religion is much retarded thereby.

A man comes here and kneels down trustfully, saying, "I want to go to heaven. O! I want forgiveness. What shall I do?" The preacher says, "Pray, believe." "Well," says the sinner, "I have prayed; I do believe." "But," replies the bungling preacher, "you must believe more; pray for more faith." This is a common scene in many modern religious meetings. And yet the sinner is not commanded to pray for faith. Let me tell you this; nowhere in the Divine Book, from Genesis to Revelation, does Jesus Christ or any of his apostles instruct the alien to PRAY for faith. And yet a great majority of the evangelists and pastors of this age do just that thing, and you know it. I presume that nine-tenths of the ministers in this city are guilty of this popular but unscriptural practice; the alien sinner says, "I haven't the faith I ought to have." To which the preacher replies, "Pray for it, Brother." But the Bible don't say that. Ministers and prominent laymen pray, "O, Lord! send down faith into this poor sinner's heart."

This reminds me of an incident which Professor Hutto related to me as occurring down in St. George, Kansas. At the mid-week prayer meeting one evening, an old lady who was very zealous in her church, but who didn't know any more than the excellent laws of the "Sunflower State" allowed, made the following striking appeal in her animated but not very scriptural prayer:—"O Lord, send down faith on a grain of mustard seed!" Now this is a true story, I don't give it as a fancy sketch, but as an actual occurrence. It ludicrously illustrates the all-too-common idea that faith comes in some mysterious manner. Too many people are waiting for the Lord to

send down faith on a grain of mustard seed, or on an iron wedge that it may pry open their stony hearts. But the Lord doesn't operate that way on the hearts of his children. If you are waiting for God to knock you down, tramp on you and pound faith into you, you will wait in vain, for the kind Heavenly Father does not resort to such extremes in order to get His children to believe.

What is the use of conglomerating the truth on this very simple question? It is not only an inexcusable but dangerous practice. I expect there are thousands of young men in Chicago who would be living Christian lives to-night if they had not been incorrectly taught on this great question. And there are doubtless thousands of middle-aged men spending this very evening in the saloon, or around some gambling table, without God and without hope in the world, who would be at religious service if they had been taught right on this great question. It seems to be almost universally imagined that a man can't become a Christian unless God in some mysterious way works on his feelings,—"fingers around his heart," and independent of any personal effort, and in spite of everything above and beneath *makes* him surrender to the service of Jesus. This is an entirely unscriptural, and wholly mistaken theory. Man is a free moral agent and can receive or reject salvation just as he chooses.

But how do we get faith? Instead of consulting some modern preacher or lay-worker, turn to Romans 10:17. Here we have the answer in very simple language.—"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Paul, is that all there is to it? Yes, that is all. The first thing a man has to do is to hear, and the thing he has to hear is the Word of God. Now, if he hears it unprej-

udicedly he will conscientiously believe, and the moment he believes, that moment he recognizes the Son of Mary as the Son of God and the world's only Saviour; and as Jesus is represented in the Bible as the Lord of Lords and King of Kings, he realizes that there is a judgment coming, and that he must get ready for that Great Day.

Faith-getting is a comparatively simple matter. No man from the Day of Pentecost down to the present moment ever obtained faith without hearing the Word of God. It is our business, as Christians, to herald the good tidings of great joy to the utmost parts of the earth. It is not enough that we should simply pray that men may become believers. If faith comes miraculously, or in answer to prayer only, then why are not all the Hottentots in the world, and the Zulus, and the Patagonians, and the inhabitants of Central Africa, and all the rest of the world,—why are they not all believers? If it rests with the Lord alone to make them Christians,—why has He not attended to His duty? If the Lord sent faith to us miraculously and not to these others, is He not a partial God? Yet the Bible says, "He is no respecter of persons." Oh! let us be honest; let us be logical. "Faith cometh by hearing." And Paul says, "How shall they hear without a preacher?" So we send out somebody, and that somebody tells the people how the Lord lived, and how He died on the Cross, and how He rose from the dead, and how He sits to-day on the Right Hand of God, having been crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. When the individual hears the story, he believes it, if he is thoughtful, unprejudiced, and honest. That is the way the alien sinner gets faith. The Christian may pray, "Lord increase our faith!" But the alien has not this privilege until he learns to love and trust the Saviour. Men are never con-

verted to Christ and His holy religion independent of human agency. When all professing Christians shall realize this, and then go to work in earnest, we will see more souls accepting the Divine Master than we ever yet have seen in the history of Christianity. It is all right to pray for the progress of the gospel; to pray God to throw about the individual converting influences; and to pray that the Truth may run and be glorified in the community; but these prayers must be followed with proper endeavor on the part of the petitioner. It is right to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done." But if we depend on God to convert the infidel without any effort on our part, we will wait until the last day of time. God says, "Ye are my servants; go, do what I tell you to do. Teach all nations." AND NOT UNTIL THE PEOPLE ARE TAUGHT WILL FAITH GET POSSESSION OF THEIR HEARTS!

We now come to the last question for the evening:

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT?

If we believe God's Holy Word; if we accept this Great Book of Truth as inspired; if we believe that Jesus was indeed and in truth God's only begotten Son; if we believe in the Holy Spirit and His comforting power; and if we believe in the Church of Christ and its wholesome influence over humanity—if we really have such faith, what shall we do with it? Shall we let it lie dormant in the heart? No. Yet that is what thousands are doing to-day. Faith of itself can't save. "Can't it?" you say. No. "I thought it could." Did you? Well, you have thought a good many things that weren't true, I expect. I have a little book in my study which says, "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." (M. E. Discipline, Page 20.) It is claimed that there are some four million people in the church

which holds that doctrine. This doctrine of faith only, may be "wholesome" to the Methodists and others, but I can't see how it can be—what Professor Fairchild, of Kansas, calls "horse-sense." The theory of "faith only" is taught in many of the churches of Chicago, and other great cities; but not one of the inspired apostles ever taught it. Many preachers and many lay-workers are saying to the poor alien sinner, "Only believe;" but the Holy Spirit never said anything of the kind. I am not very rich in this world's goods, but I will give $50.00 to any one who will show me where God ever, under the Christian Dispensation, promised to save anybody by "faith alone." James says, "Faith without works is dead." Why, if faith alone saves, then the devils themselves are all right. For James, addressing the twelve tribes, says:—"Thou believest there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble." On one occasion, you remember, the demons cried out, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?" Did that save them? They acknowledged the Son of Mary to be the Son of God! But that was not enough.

I venture the assertion that there are five hundred thousand believers in the City of Chicago who are still in an unsaved condition. Why? Because faith alone can't save them. Hence it is of great moment when you get this faith to decide what you are going to do with it. I do not draw any great distinction between the words "faith" and "belief." When Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," he evidently meant by that word "believe" *complete obedience*, for we see the Philippian jailer putting on Christ in baptism the same hour of the night. So we draw no great distinction between "faith" and "belief," for both, as used by Paul, include

a complete self-surrender of the individual to the Lord. As used in James 2:19, however, the word "believe" represents what may be termed merely an intellectual, or inactive attitude. In order to be saved, therefore, the believer must employ his faith in keeping all of the commandments given in God's Holy Law. And he must employ it consistently too. He must do just what God tells him to do, not in his own, but in God's way. That is "saving faith."

The Bible is full of proofs on this point. We might quote Second Peter 1:5-8, "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." You see we are to use faith by adding to it the doing of the things which God has commanded Christians to do.

Again we might read James 1:22, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." And again, in John 14:15, Jesus, our blessed Master, says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And in Romans 12:1, Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

And so on. I might give you many more passages, but these will suffice to show us what we are to do with faith. We are to exercise it by doing just what God tells us to do in God's way—not my way, not your way, not some man's way, but God's way. And here it all hangs—taking God at his word; doing just

what he tells us to do and asking no questions; discharging every duty cheerfully and not parleying with the Lord. The true believer never says, "Lord, we won't do this, for it does not seem to us essential;" or, "We will just let this or that commandment go. We don't feel like keeping it, for it does not seem to us necessary." Oh, no! The true believer, without asking any unnecessary questions, or expressing any doubt, will go forward gladly and do everything God commands him to do.

But oh, there are so many to-day who make the commandments of God null and void by their traditions and ecclesiasticisms. Some, for instance, say that baptism is not essential to salvation. Others say that it makes no difference what religious name you wear, for there is nothing in a name anyway. Ah! The world is full of theories.

"Well," says one, "what of it?" Much, very much. Our eternal inheritance depends upon our faithful obedience to the commandments of God. We must follow his directions implicitly or lose all. It is so in the affairs of this carnal life; why not in the spiritual? Let me illustrate: Suppose I say to Professor Hutto, "My Brother, I have concluded to make you a little present. I think a good deal of you and want to manifest my affection in a practical manner. And as we appreciate things more when we have to put forth an effort to get them, I will put you to a little trouble. I have buried away a thousand dollars in gold (I haven't done it, so none of you need be alarmed. This is only an illustration.) I buried it due west of the railroad, just a half-mile from the track. If you will walk out there and turn north just two rods from the street, you will find an old cellar, in the southeast corner of which has sprung up a cotton-wood tree. Three feet west of

this tree I dug a hole three feet deep, and in the bottom deposited the money in an old coffee-pot. (I was afraid to put it in the bank, for fear the bank might break, and the cashier depart for Canada, so I thought I would just bury it out there.) Now, I will give you that money if you want it bad enough to go in person and get it.

Well, of course he wants it, and promptly decides to go. He thinks of the many nice things he can buy with a thousand dollars—a long coat, patent leather shoes, a high hat, a bicycle, a type-writer, a kodak camera, a dogcart and horse. Oh, my! he could buy lots of things with that thousand dollars.

I say to him, "You believe me, Professor?"

"Yes."

"I never have broken my word with you?"

"No."

"And you want the money?"

"Yes."

"And you think you will find it if you follow my directions?"

"Yes, of course I will," he says—and shovel in hand he starts for the old cellar.

And just half a mile from the railroad track he stops and inquires if there are any old cellars in that neighborhood. A laborer informs him that just ten rods north, there is one.

"Has it a cotton-wood tree in one corner?"

"Yes."

"And ten rods south," says the laborer, "there is another old cellar, and it happens that there is a cotton-wood tree in the corner of that one too."

"Well," says the Professor, "I don't see that it makes any difference which cellar I dig in. Each has a cotton-wood tree, and the one on the south isn't quite as muddy as the one on the north." So he goes ten rods south and digs.

Does he find the gold? Of course not. Why? Because he dug in the wrong cellar. So he comes back and says:

"How is this, Brother Hall? I went out there half a mile, and ten rods from the street I dug in an old cellar under a cotton-wood tree, but there was no gold there."

"Which side of the street?"

"Well, I dug on the south side, I believe."

"Didn't I tell you north? You go back and follow the directions implicitly."

Thus a great many persons, when they are told by the Book of God to be baptized, are sprinkled, or poured, because that is a little easier. A preacher at Emporia, Kansas, told the people that it didn't make any difference whether they used much water or little. He declared that for baptismal purposes a quart was just as good as an ocean full, as it was baptism all the same. But either that preacher or the Apostle Peter is wrong. Which would you naturally suppose?

Professor Hutto retraces his steps, goes ten rods north of the street and finds the old cellar, and there in the corner is the cotton-wood tree.

"Well," he says, "he told me to go three feet west of the tree, but I don't see any necessity of going west; it is a very inconvenient place to dig. I guess I will dig right here three feet north." And he digs. He drives his shovel down one, two, three feet. Does he find the money? Of course not. Why? Because he has failed to follow the directions. It is true that he went a half-mile from the railroad track, and then turned north ten rods, and then dug down three feet from the cotton-wood tree. He did just as MUCH as he was told to do, but he did not do it in the right way. The Lord directs us to repent and be immersed. "But

why not pour or sprinkle a little water on the head, it is so much handier?" Yes, that is it. That is what Brother Hutto thought when digging for his money, —IT IS EASIER. People are always trying to discover some easy way to heaven. Hence a large majority of church members are simply sprinkled or poured for baptism. But I say to you to-night before God, (and I shall stand before the judgment bar to give an account of my sermons, and you shall stand there too, to give an account for the way you have listened to and applied them)—I say in the love and fear of our Eternal Father that the man who is simply poured or sprinkled for baptism has no promise of forgiveness! And so with human names, creeds, etc. Go contrary to God's directions and there is no promise, no well-founded hope. If we want the reward we must do those things which bring the reward.

When at last the Professor goes west of the tree three feet and digs down three feet he finds his gold. Why? Because he has done just what I told him to do, in the way I told him to do it. And so let me counsel you, if you believe in God, follow God's directions implicitly. Don't do any other thing. If He says believe, why, *believe.* If He says repent, *repent.* If He says be baptized, why, OBEY HIM. If He says add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, do it. Don't say, "I can get along just as well without keeping God's laws strictly." You can't do it, my brother. Don't say this or that is non-essential. Remember, oh, do remember, that God never commanded a non-essential! Don't think that you can leave out anything that the Lord has commanded and be saved. You cannot become a Christian until you obey the commandments of God. You may become a member of some man-made church

without doing so, but not a member of *God's church.* The moment you obey the necessary commandments, and not before, that moment you become a Christian, and a member of the body of Christ, and the Father acknowledges you as his child. And so I plead with you to-night to exercise your faith in doing just what God tells you to do. Oh, if you will, what joy will be ushered into the soul! What peace into the heart! With what happiness will your days be crowned! What exuberant hope will take possession of your soul! Have faith, then, and use it. Trust God implicitly. Without asking any unnecessary questions just go forward and obey His commandments, and all will be well.

"Have faith in God, He who reigns on high
Hath borne thy grief and hears the suppliant's sigh;
Still to his arms, thine only refuge, fly!
Have faith in God.

"Fear not to call on Him, O soul distressed,
Thy sorrow's whisper wooes thee to His breast;
He who is oftenest there is oftenest blest.
Have faith in God.

"Lean not on Egypt's reeds; slake not thy thirst
At earthly cisterns. Seek the kingdom first.
Though man and satan fright thee with their worst,
Have faith in God.

"Go, tell Him all! The sigh thy bosom heaves
Is heard in heaven. Strength and peace He gives,
Who gave himself for thee. Our Jesus lives;
Have faith in God."

(*Anna Shipton.*)

Ah! if you want the reward of the "just made perfect," you must have faith in God. The Unitarian says, "We have faith in God, but we don't think Jesus Christ was divine; we think He was a good man, but not a God." But, my brother, you cannot

please God unless you believe in His Son. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already." John 3:18. You can't have forgiveness of sins, much less eternal life, unless you acknowlege Jesus to be the Christ. Unitarians have some fairly good scholars among them; but they reject much of God's Word, and deny the divinity of Christ. For all such there is absolutely no promise.

Then have faith in God! "He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." What a precious gift! No wonder the Apostle Paul, gifted in speech though he was, calls it "the unspeakable gift." Oh, have faith in the Gift and the Giver alike, for they are one. Put your trust in Christ! Walk implicitly in his footsteps! Yield not to temptation, but yield to Him who died for you! Consecrate your all to Him, for He alone is able to save!

If there is one here to-night who has faith, will you not confess the Lord? Come, and the angels of God will rejoice. Come to-night, because all heaven and all earth are interested in your decision. Come, for God who made you in His image wants to see you redeemed by His love! COME!

REPENTANCE.

Acts 3:19. "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

It is not the purpose of our Saviour to leave men in their sins, but to bring them out of their sins. It is not the purpose of our Heavenly Father to receive unto himself a single person so long as that person is in a state of sin.

The Scriptures tell us that no impure thing shall pass within the Pearly Gates,—"There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." No blasphemer, no traducer, no wicked man so long as he has a single sin unforgiven will be permitted to enter heaven. The New Jerusalem is a clean city, and will have none but clean citizens. Yes, heaven is made for pure men, pure women, and pure children; heaven is made for the redeemed, and for those who have never fallen, and for no others. The Godhead has never fallen, and the angels which surround the Throne have never fallen; but all other beings have fallen. Heaven is made for the redeemed, from among whom not a man, woman, or child need go up to the Bar of God with a single sin to answer for.

"But," says one, "doesn't the Bible say all have sinned?" Yes, that is true. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." But in another place the same apostle declares that "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." If you

get into Christ and stay in Christ and add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; in short, if you observe all the Christian virtues, and live a true, prayerful, Christ-like life, there will be no trouble about your being permitted to enter that glorious abode and dwell forever.

So the subject of Repentance is of very great importance, as no one can possibly go to heaven without it. A man may have great faith, and great love—love so great, so large, so full, so comprehensive in every way that he can just overlook all the injuries and persecutions that may be heaped upon him in life from enemies, and the misunderstandings of friends, —and still be lost; a man may be able to overlook the inconsistencies of professed Christians, and be charitable to all, yet if he is not a repentant man he cannot be saved. Faith and love avail nothing without repentance.

Let us cite a few passages of Scripture on this great subject. Notice first Acts 2:37, 38:—"Now when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" and the first thing Peter said to them was, "REPENT."

Notice the words of the Master as recorded in Luke 13:3:—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." According to this there is no possible salvation without repentance. Notice the declaration of Paul as recorded in Acts 17:30:—"The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

Clearly, then, there is no redemption for the unrepentant man. Naturally we inquire, therefore,

"WHAT IS REPENTANCE?" if it is a matter of such tremendous importance. Oh, then, for our soul's sake and for God's sake, let us have a plain definition of repentance. It is painful to contemplate, but none the less a fact, that the theological world has set thousands of minds adrift on this subject as well as on the subjects of faith, baptism, etc. Not a few religious instructors seem to think that mere sorrow for sin is repentance, and teach, all too freely, this mistaken view. Suppose a man has been a drunkard for ten years, has ruined his health, brought disgrace upon his family, and the awful consequences of guilt upon his soul. He goes over to Mr. Keeley and takes his medicine, pays him the necessary seventy-five or one hundred dollars, and returns home cured, and says, "I will never touch another drop. I am sorry that I have made such a fool of myself so long, and am determined to let liquor alone forever now." Is that repentance? Specifically, Yes. Scripturally, No. So far as the liquor habit is concerned, Yes. So far as Jesus Christ is concerned, not at all. That man for years has been a curse to himself, to his family and to society. At last when he finds that he cannot live much longer if he continues to drink, he quits. But what for? Why, for policy's sake; for the sake of a better standing in society, a better showing among his fellow men, and his own physical welfare, he stops drinkng. Thousands of men who have repented of the liquor habit are not repentant men Scripturally. Why? Because they do it in their own name and for their own sake.

Repentance Scripturally is doing what we do in Christ's name and for Christ's sake. There are two words in the Greek which are translated "repent," one meaning a change either for the better or the worse, the other always meaning a change

for the better. And the latter is used in the New Testament. Repentance, *therefore, implies a change for the better in the name of, by the commandment of, and for the sake of Christ.* It is inseparably allied with a change of heart.

Now right here some one may say, "I always thought you Disciples did not believe in a change of heart." Did you? You thought unadvisedly then. Listen! I know something about the Christian Church and its belief. My father and mother, and my grand-parents, were Disciples long before I was born. I know many of our leading ministers throughout the United States. Was educated in one of our best universities. Have read our leading periodicals for years. And I declare emphatically that there is *not a single minister among us*—(and we have about six thousand of them) *who does not believe in and teach a change of heart!* But we do not think a change of heart to be anything miraculous or supernatural at all. It is simply a change of motive, a change of desire, a change of determination, a change of resolution; in short a complete change of life. And this change is not brought about by any mysterious working of the Holy Spirit on our mental faculties. No, no. There is nothing supernatural about it. But just as natural as it is for grass to grow, so natural is it for man to have a change of heart if he takes God at His Word. That repentance which involves a change of heart means a complete change of life, a complete surrender of self to the Master, a complete laying of our all at the feet of Jesus. And all this is brought about by an intelligent obedience to the precepts of the gospel. And this we do, not for our own sake merely; not merely for the sake of family, or friends, or society, or any worldly opportunity, or ambition; but for Christ's sake,—because we love Him and are willing to trust Him.

There are three prominent elements in every genuine, heartfelt repentance:

First of all, Sorrow for sin. Right here a great many stop. They seem to think that if they cry a little they have repented; that the Lord will forgive them just as soon as they let a few hot tears fall. And if they cry real hard, they are reported as soundly converted! Nowadays the preacher often declaims a few pathetic stories in his sermon, and then asks, —"How many want to go to heaven?" And possibly forty or fifty will put up their hands, or arise, or kneel at the "altar," and after a few prayers and stirring songs, many are reported to have "gotten through," and the people sing "Praise God!" It is not wrong, of course, to praise God for good promises, and good resolutions on the part of an alien sinner; but it is all a mistake to call these repentance. Sorrow alone is not the sum total of conversion by a great deal.

In many old-fashioned meetings, you remember, sorrowing sinners would kneel at the "mourner's bench," and under the influence of some magnetic exhorter the tears would stream down their cheeks till it would seem they must have stood in puddles on the floor, while they prayed in sobbing tones, "Oh, Lord, have mercy! Saviour, help! Come right now and forgive!" I do not believe in such revivals, so-called. "Distracted meeting" would be a better term. They have driven many individuals into skepticism.

Don't imagine that you have repented just because you have bellowed a little. You might find yourself greatly mistaken at the Day of Judgment. I want to speak plainly on these things, for I fear thousands of precious souls have been led astray, and left to drift on in sin, by just such earnest but fearfully unscriptural practices as I have here described. Sorrow alone cannot save you; prayers alone cannot avail.

Your motive may be all right, but God wants more than good intentions. God has nowhere promised to forgive you just because you feel bad. Far be it from me, for a moment, however, to ridicule tears. No, no. I would to God that every young man in Chicago could be brought to shed tears, and bitter ones too, over his sins, his wickedness, his forgetfulness of God and mother. Sorrow is all right so far as it goes, but it constitutes only one element in repentance. A man can't repent without feeling sorry; but this is only the first step in true penitence.

The second element is, *A determination to quit sin.* A man says: "Here, I have been living a wicked life; I am sorry. Have been squandering my money, time, mental faculties, and physical powers. Have been squandering everything that is precious in the sight of my Maker, and I do regret it most sincerely. Now I have determined that I will quit. I will turn over a new leaf; I am resolved to be better." Here we have the second element of Scriptural repentance, a determination to do better; an earnest, heartfelt resolution to do what is right in the future, and to do it, too, in the name of Christ. Here is where thousands stop. Many a sinner regrets his waywardness very keenly, but loves his sin too much to give it up.

The third element of repentance is *Action!* Sorrow-stricken because of his weight of guilt, but hopeful through his new-born resolution, the sinner says, "I will quit! For Christ's sake I will do better." So suiting the action to the word, he quits. Then, and not till then, has he repented. Sam Jones' advice to sinners is, "QUIT YOUR MEANNESS!" This is the burden of his sermons wherever he goes,—"QUIT YOUR MEANNESS!" Good advice. It would be a wholesome thing if we could have that motto printed in bold letters and swung up over every counter in the land.

You know that in many places they say, "Here, we sell you all-wool goods a yard wide." But when you get home and examine your purchase carefully you find that it is only seven-eighths wide, and it is half cotton! It would prevent lots of cheating if this motto could be swung up over the counter where we buy sugar. "Best in the market," affirms the grocer; but when you get home and attempt to use it, you find that it is one fourth fine white sand! QUIT YOUR MEANNESS! You go to the meat-shop and call for a pound of sirloin, and while you are looking up at the scales to see that the butcher weighs it right he weighs his hand three ounces. I have heard of butchers doing that. I presume there are few so reckless, but those few ought to QUIT THEIR MEANNESS!

This is certainly a great doctrine. It is the crowning element of repentance. To quit one's meanness for Christ's sake is a noble thing. But it is nobler still when you quit to STAY QUIT. That's what the world needs,—men who will quit their meanness forever! Not for a day, or a week, or a month, or a year; not during the revival merely; not until the watermelon season; but FOREVER. We need more ever-blooming Christians,—those who will work at the business all through the spring, the summer, the fall, and the winter months. Going to heaven is a life-job; and the Lord wants his soldiers to "enlist for the war." Of course it is pretty hard work for a man to be a good Christian in the spring of the year. (I expect your experience and mine tally.) These warm, lazy nights we feel like anything but going to prayer meeting; anything but going to morning and evening service on the bright Lord's day, so suggestive of the cool park; anything but being real religious. It is hard work. But I'm glad of it, for there would be little honor in going to heaven if it did not call forth

noblest efforts. QUIT YOUR MEANNESS, then, friendly sinner, and quit forever. Then trust the Master and he will lead you. Down in the valley, up on the mountain, out through the green pastures of peace and prosperity,—wherever you go He will lead you by His gentle hand, and shield you from the darts of sin!

First, then, a keen sorrow for sin. Second, a determination to quit sin. And third, suiting the action to the word,—quitting once for all. This is true repentance. It is the kind of repentance Peter demanded of the Jews on the Day of Pentecost when three thousand were added to the church. It is the kind that the apostles demanded everywhere, and it is the kind Jesus Christ expects of you.

Repentance is needed in Chicago. It is needed the world over. Not a half-way and half-hearted repentance, but the complete article; not a mere beginning, but a genuine quitting of sin because Christ has commanded it.

Let me give you some examples from the Word, illustrative of true repentance. There are many, but I will select only two, one from the Old Testament and one from the New.

Take first the case of Jonah and the Ninevites. The Lord said to Jonah, "I want you to go over and preach to the Ninevites. I have a great work for you there. I want you to go to that great city and preach and tell those wicked people that Jehovah wants them to repent,—to quit their meanness; and that if they don't he will speedily cut them off from the face of the earth." But Jonah, who lived in the land of Judea, did not want to go. He was very well contented where he was, and didn't want to borrow any trouble about the Ninevites—he didn't have any hankering after a city charge! I have sometimes thought it strange that Jonah did not want

to go and take a city pulpit. How different from preachers of the present generation! You might hunt from the icy plains of Manitoba to the evergreen glades of Florida, and from the rock-bound coast of the Atlantic to the sunny slopes of the Pacific to-day and not find a single preacher who wouldn't be glad to capture a city pulpit! Nothing like being a city preacher. But Jonah didn't want any city "in his," and so he tried hard to get away. I expect he said to himself, "Now I don't want to go to Nineveh. Really I am not fitted for that work The Lord can certainly find somebody that will do it better."

Some of you do that way when your pastor comes to you and says, "I want you to do some personal work." You say, "Oh, go to that brother or that sister; they can do it so much better." I fear it is only a pious way some of you have of shirking duty.

But the Lord said to Jonah, "I want you to go." Jonah, however, secretly decided that he wouldn't go, but that he would get out of the way. So he took a ship down at Joppa and started for far-off Spain. He was determined to draw the line at city missions, and I suppose he never would have gone to Nineveh if the Lord *hadn't whaled him!*

Well, we can't blame Jonah much for not wanting to go. It was a difficult thing in those days to go six hundred miles across the country. The people had no palace-cars to ride in, for lightning express trains with Pullman coaches did not come into use for over 2,500 years after his death. He didn't have the luxury of our old-fashioned stage-coach. And in truth I don't know that he had even a camel-back transportation. He probably went on foot. His route ran through a mountainous region where he must ever be on the lookout for thieves and robbers. It probably took him three months to make that ar-

duous journey. And the task was all the more difficult because it wasn't a task of love, but he went because he *had to*, he didn't want any more difficulty with the Lord.

The population of Nineveh is not certainly known. Historians are not agreed concerning the number of inhabitants in prominent cities of ancient times. But there were probably about one million souls in Nineveh. It was a great city, but full of lust, passion, evil appetite, and wickedness of every form known to the people of those simple days. There was possibly not a single devout person in the city! Then, imagine one poor, weak little prophet preaching to that awful mass of moral corruption the duty of *repentance!* But that was Jonah's task, and once at it well did he perform it. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," he cried. I imagine there was a great deal of sport made over the message at first. Some of the people probably said, "Ho, ho! there is a new man come to town, preaching something new under the sun. He tells us that if we don't repent his Lord is going to wipe us all out." And they laughed and laughed. It was *so* rich. The biggest ha-ha's went up at various street corners, and motley crowds collected here and there to see who could say the wittiest thing about the matter. If there had been any daily newspapers in those days, I expect they would have had full reports under such startling headlines as, "A CRANK IN TOWN! PREACHING REPENTANCE! NINEVEH TO BE DESTROYED!" And all the Board of Trade men, merchants, artisans, and hucksters, would have read it with a smile of curiosity and passed on. If a man preaches a good, old-fashioned scriptural hell nowadays, there are many to pity him for being so far behind the times. There are lots of people who don't believe in hell because they don't

want to. *It would hurt their business!* I don't suppose there is a saloon-keeper in Chicago who has a good healthy belief in hell,—it would unnerve him for his business. I suppose there is not a single adulterer in Chicago that has a well-developed belief in hell. I suppose the average young man who swears and gambles and carouses around seven nights in the week admiresthe Universalist's doctrine of "no hell," because it would be so unpleasant for him, when he is so fortunate as to get sober for a day,to think that there is a place of punishment awaiting the wicked. Oh, no! the world don't want to believe in hell. It don't want to be told of its meanness. It wants us preachers to talk eloquently about its great improvements, its noble men, its brilliant prospects, etc. It wants us to pat it on the back and say,"Good World; Fine World; All-Go-To-Heaven World, AMEN!" But that kind of preaching can never save a dying race.

So, I suppose when Jonah commenced to preach the wicked Ninevites laughed. But he didn't care. He was now thoroughly aroused, and undoubtedly spoke with no uncertain meaning. I expect he said, "You have been trampling God's laws underfoot; you are a pack of shameless sinners; your city is a great moral cancer. And if you don't repent—if you don't get sorry and resolve to do better,and then carry out your resolution, the Lord will punish every last one of you!" He had no fine pulpit with a pipe organ to back him. He preached on the street. His audience may have been very small at first. But one would hear him and tell somebody else; and they in turn, would tell others (that's the way to build up a crowd). I have no doubt there were many who said, "I don't like the fellow at all." One said, "I don't like his manner." Another said, "I don't like his diction." And still another said, "I don't like the

way he dresses; don't you go to hear him; catch me going there again! No, not much; why, he uses slang! And he says such hard things; oh, no; I would advise you not to go to hear him." But that only makes the other fellow more anxious to hear, and the prophet soon had a vast attendance upon his services. Finally three or four believed, and soon a mighty interest in the message from God swept over the populace. I expect that one of the king's courtiers happened along one day, and, being much moved by the burning words of the preacher, hastened to the palace and told his master all about it. The old monarch became interested and commanded his servants to take him out in state to hear the strange messenger. I suppose that Jonah "had his spunk up" in earnest by this time. He was not willing to go to Nineveh at first, but now that he was in it he would do his best. I admire Jonah's "spunk." He undoubtedly knew that this rich and high-toned hearer preferred sugar-coated pills of truth, homeopathic at that; but he wasn't sent there to try to tickle the ears of any certain class. So I imagine that when he saw the king drive up in his splendid equipage he shouted, "Ah, ha! old king, you make a fine display, but in truth you are a mean, wicked old sinner like all the rest, and if you don't repent the Lord will cut you off in your wickedness. Yet forty-days and your city will be overthrown!"

Jonah did not use any mock modesty. Excessive politeness is one of the common sins among people who lack backbone. If the speaker uses a very common United States word, some over-fastidious soul is ready to apply that ugly word, SLANG. No matter how well the word or expression illustrates his point, it is considered all wrong. It is simply ridiculous, this mock modesty. We all live in glass

houses when it comes to the use of language. And yet I have had these would-be guardians of the king's English write me anonymous letters suggesting what to preach and how to preach it—criticising a course which, under God, has always been successful so far, and proposing another which is yet to be tried. And then after belaboring me in no commendable spirit, they have signed themselves, "Your Friend!" Friend nothing! I could take a horse-hair, and punching the pith out of it, put a dozen such friends (!) in the hole!

I suppose Jonah said, "I would not give a snap of my finger for all your grandeur. Your whole kingdom is not worth a farthing unless you quit your meanness." Ah, yes! You may be rich, and have a fine residence, with many servants!—but if you don't get down on your knees and pour out your soul in penitence before God for past sins, He will destroy you. The soul of the saloon-keeper, and of the poor waif that sleeps in the garret, is as precious in the sight of God as the soul of the rich millionaire. And the one is just as obnoxious as the other if steeped in wickedness.

Jonah was no respecter of persons. The king heard him thoughtfully and said, "That is true. I am sorry to say that I have been a very sinful man. But I am now determined to quit my meanness." And then suiting the action to the word, he arose from his seat of dignity, and, laying aside his rich robes, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And then it wasn't long, I suppose, till all the big men of the city, and the high-toned society people began to repent also. It is a good thing to have a prominent man converted if he only remains true to the sacred cause he espouses. Prominent men have much influence. But many of them do not use their influ-

ence to the glory of God. I am glad for one that there is a final judgment; am glad that prominent men who use their great influence for the world, the flesh, and the devil will be held responsible. And if there is any difference in degrees of punishment such men will be punished worse in the last day than the poor, untutored, and un-influential sinner.

Jonah cried, "Repent, repent! Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed—forty days of grace, and if you don't quit your meanness Nineveh will most certainly be destroyed!" If I had divine authority to say to-night, "Forty days and Chicago will be destroyed!" and then to-morrow night, "Only thirty-nine days more and Chicago will be destroyed!" and then Sunday, "Only thirty-seven days more,"— and so on, it would not be many days down to "Only one day more and Chicago will be destroyed," and the people would turn to the Lord by thousands and tens of thousands. Yes, if I had the divine authority to say that this great sale of souls will continue only ten days more, it would not be long until this large tabernacle would be too small to hold the people who were anxious to get away from Satan, the hard taskmaster, and come to Christ. But, dear friends, I do not know that we will have forty days of grace. We may not, and yet we may have several thousand days. But I do know this; that unless we repent, and, figuratively speaking, cover ourselves with sackcloth, and sit in ashes, we must all perish forever.

In order to get the subject before your minds still more clearly and forcibly allow me to take one illustration from the New Testament—the story of the Prodigal Son—which Mr. Talmage, I believe, calls the prince of parables. I will modernize the story somewhat, hoping thereby to make the lesson more impressive.

There was a rich man who had two sons. We will call one Henry and the other John. Henry had attained unto his majority, and thought a great deal of his father and mother. He didn't care to marry any of the girls in the neighborhood, but kept right on faithfully attending to his father's property, knowing that after a while it would all be divided between himself and brother. Now John, the younger of the two heirs, was of a very different disposition; he was a little wild and careless, anxious to do something new and different. He didn't like the quiet humdrum of the old neighborhood. So one day he said, "Father, give me my portion, and I will go out and do for myself." "Oh, no!" said his kind old father, "I would rather you would stay here, John. Mother and I are getting old now, and soon everything we have will be yours and Henry's. You had better stay at the old home, my boy." "No," said John, "I feel that I must get away. My ambition is too great for this sleepy old community. Better give me my portion, Father, and let me go." The father at last consented, and gave the thoughtless youth his part of the property. He had a herd of cattle, I suppose, and a flock of sheep, and a lot of servants, and quite a sum of money. Thus equipped he started for a far country, perhaps soliloquizing, "I want to get as far away as possible from the old home. Can't accomplish anything hanging around here." I presume he waved his hand and shouted gleefully, "Good-bye, Father; good-bye, Mother! I will write to you when I have time." That is doubtless about the way he took his departure from father and mother and brother.

They looked anxiously for the promised messages, but they came few and far between. The letters were sometimes two weeks, sometimes three weeks, and sometimes six weeks in coming, and then were

very short and hurried. Oh, young man, when you go away from the old home to do for yourself, don't forget to write to father and mother. No matter how far from the old fireside you may roam, their hearts will beat on in tender affection for you. Don't neglect to write home. It is a sacred duty. Never let seven days pass over your head without sending some message, if it is only a dozen words, to the dear ones left behind.

John went out to a distant country where there was good pasturage and a good market for his stock. He settled down and commenced doing business, and for the first few months everything went prosperously. Then temptations came. He was introduced into the so-called "best society" (which is often the worst for one's morals). Anxious mothers began to look with wistful eyes upon this splendid young man as a good "catch" for their daughters, and divers young ladies were "setting their caps" for this rich young lord from Judea. He was soon not only on the top wave in the social swim, but a "hail fellow well met" with the fast young bloods of the city.

One day as he was passing along the street, some of his friends hailed him and said, "John, come in and have a drink with us." But he replied, "No, boys, I don't drink." "Well, then, come in and have a cigar." "No, I don't smoke either." "Ah, come on now, be a man!" Thus by appeals to vanity and undue persuasion, many would-be friends cause the ruin of thousands of young men. John finally went in and took a cigar. After chatting awhile he said he must be going on, but promised to drop in and smoke with them another evening. The boys kept on the watch for him, and in another day or two called out as he was passing by, "John, come in and have that cigar." "All right, fellows, I don't care if I do." He

went in and happened to sit down beside a little unsuspicious looking table while smoking. It was a gaming table, but as John had been well raised he knew nothing about cards. However, he looked on, and when the game was opened he was asked to "take a hand." "No," he said, "I don't know one card from another." "Oh, we don't believe that!" chimed in the shrewd players. "You need not pretend to us that you are a good little Sunday School boy and don't kown one card from another." This was too much. He grew desperate, and taking up the cards he deceitfully remarked, "It has been some time since I played—am a little rusty." He was not long in learning the game. Then one night he took a glass of beer, so as not to be boorish, and after a while he took two or three glasses. He soon became a pretty good player, and then his shrewd tempter proposed to play for money. But John said, "Oh, no, boys! I never play for money." "Oh well, we will play for the cigars, then." He yielded, and a few nights after they played for the drinks, and he won. Finally they permitted him to play for just a few cents, and then for five dollars. John said to himself, "I don't believe this is exactly right." But he won, and so began to think he was a pretty fine player.

That is the way thousands of young men start down. I don't speak from experience, for I never played a game of euchre, or whist, or poker in my life; I never smoked a cigar in my life; and I never tasted liquor in my life. I speak simply from observation, and from a somewhat extended acquaintance with books and newspapers. I will leave those of you who have had experience to say whether this modern picture of the prodigal son is not a very truthful representation of the course that is being taken by thousands of young men to-night. You

know it is just the way hundreds of young men in Chicago are traveling this very moment!

So they commenced playing for money. They let him have a few games, and then they began to win. That made him angry, and he said to himself, "I will show you fellows how to play." He put up a large stake. But to his amazement and utter chagrin they won that from him also. Then he grew desperate, and began to bet larger and larger amounts.

I read of a man some time ago who owned a fine saloon in Denver. He was estimated to be worth a good hundred thousand dollars. He walked into his place of business one night, and, seeing an interesting game in progress at one of his tables, thought he would "take a hand" in it. He threw down a bill, and to his amazement the other fellows won it. He threw down two or three larger bills, and they took them also. Then he was mad, and taking a great roll of money out of his pocket threw it on the table, rolled up his sleeves, and sat down to "show them how to play." But in a few brief hours that proud gambler left what had until that fatal occasion been his own saloon *a beggar*,—he had lost a hundred thousand dollars in one brief night, to say nothing of his soul.

Years ago a young man started to Arkansas, with some nine hundred dollars in his possession, the savings from several years honest toil. He was going to the hot springs for his health. On the way he was delayed at a certain place, and while waiting at a hotel was induced to play for money. He won a neat little sum and retired. About this time a stranded sport threw down a button and said, "I will bet that against a quarter." Some one played with him and lost. Another then bet a half dollar with him and lost. Pretty soon the now lucky gambler had won

three or four dollars. The young man who had retired was not satisfied to have matters going so. He said to himself, "I will just get up and win that." So he arose and dressed and started in to win *a button!* That is all he would have gotten, just a cheap little button. But his luck had departed from him, and before morning he had lost his nine hundred dollars. He was compelled to make his way home without the button, without his money, without having regained his health, and, worst of all, without his manhood.

Thieves and murderers and bank-robbers and all sorts of evil-doers often get their first lessons at the gaming table. And yet many professed Christians play cards, and teach their children to do likewise.

This young Jew wagered away his possessions—his horses, his flocks, his herds, his all. I suppose that everything went—his land, his bank-stock, and possibly even his clothes. (Going down the Mississippi on a steamer in the days of slavery, a colored fireman once gambled until he had lost all of his money and all his clothes, and finally in sheer desperation he bet his own freedom. Yes, he put up his papers of freedom, bet them and lost, and was taken to the auction block and sold into slavery again.) It is said of the poor prodigal that "he wasted his substance in riotous living." Then, I suppose, he was cast out from society. No more anxious mothers looked upon him as a fit "match" for their daughters. No more ladies "set their caps" for him. When his money was gone they had no further use for him, and so practically *kicked him out.* That's the way the world does.

I was hurrying along the streets of Des Moines, Iowa, one afternoon years ago when I was reporting for an evening newspaper, when suddenly my attention was called to a crowd in front of a corner saloon. I lost no time in joining them, anxious for any item

of interest for my paper. I saw a large, finely built man lying there on the stone sidewalk, his face all bleeding. As nearly as I could learn the particulars from the bystanders he had wanted more drink, but his supply of money having become exhausted the saloon-keeper had kicked him out, and there he lay in a pitiful condition. What must his poor, miserable wife, and wretched, school-less children have thought of him? Oh, friends, there is much sorrow in this world —much sin. From sin comes dissipation, and trouble, and ruin.

After this young prodigal had spent all, he soon found himself in sore want for the very necessities of life, and was finally compelled to join himself to a citizen of that country who sent him into the fields to tend swine, and you know a Jew detested the occupation of swine-herd. But it was that or starve. I presume some of his old-time associates passing by exclaimed, "Ah! young man, you used to fly pretty high, but we observe that you have come down a few pegs. Good enough for you." And so they jeered at him, taunted him, and turned their heads away in derision. While discharging his humiliating duties, he got to thinking about his checkered career. He thought the whole matter over, and the Record says, "He came to himself." There is a world of meaning in that sentence, "HE CAME TO HIMSELF." He meditated upon what a good chance he had had,—how he had worried his old father, and squandered the property which he had given him. He thought about his kind-faced old mother, and how she had borne with him in childhood and youth. He grew very sorry and said, "I will arise and go to my father. I am sorry I have been so mean; I will be better in the future." And suiting the action to the word he arose and traveled that long road back to the old home.

In my mind's eye I can see him coming up over the hill after a long, tedious journey; foot-sore, clothing in rags, beard long-grown, eyes sunken—a humble, crest-fallen, homesick man. With what joy he spies the old gate, and the two cottonwood trees! "Just the same as when I left five years ago! And there is the well, and the sweep, and the old oaken bucket! And yonder in the pasture are the cattle, and in the lot hard by the horses are at play! And there is the old-fashioned house—HOME! And is that mother there on the stoop?" When he saw and thought of mother, tears started, the fountains of affection so long pent up were opened at last and great hot tears rolled down his hardened cheeks. "Is it possible that I see mother? Oh, I am not fit to go back there! But I have no other place to go. If father will just make me one of his hired servants—if he will just let me serve—" —with these thoughts he started down the hill. Just then I imagine the father looked out of the window, and seeing the footman approaching, said, "Mother, come here! Don't that man walk like our John? See?" And mother, taking her apron, wiped her glasses, and, looking earnestly, said, "I believe he does walk like our John!" And when she thought of John the big tears began to fall, and she said, "Maybe that is John coming home." Oh, if she could just see John. She didn't care whether John was a prodigal or not, if she could only have him once more at the old hearth-stone. So they looked, and he came nearer and nearer. At last they knew of a surety, that it was John. He came slowly up the steps, and knocked at the door.

Did the old gentleman go to the door? No! He sat down in his easy chair, elevated his feet, and leisurely proceeded to look over the stock reports in his evening paper. His weary, sin-sick son knocked again; but the old gentleman

didn't stir. Mother said, "May I not open the door, father?" But he said, "No. I will attend to this little matter myself." John knocked again and again, and when nobody came to the door one of the servants looked round the corner and said, "The old gentleman is in there. Maybe he don't hear you. Better knock again; he has grown a little hard of hearing lately." So he kept on knocking—his heart so heavy and sad. Finally the old gentleman opened the door and excitedly exclaimed, "Ah, you have come back at last, have you? Want in the house, do you? Well, you just go round the house and stay in the woodshed six months and then you may come in!"

Did he say that? No! Did he say, "I will call the family together and take a vote on you and see if they all think you are fit to come in?" No! Did he say, "Wait until next covenant day and we will let you in?" No! He did not say anything about "six months' *suspicion*," or a "good moral character," or a "Christian experience." All this would have been the sheerest nonsense, not to say inexcusable meanness. And yet that is the way the theological world of the nineteenth century talks to inquiring sinners! But God never talked so.

No! There is no six months' probation, no voting on members, no putting off till the next session, etc., in the Bible. Three thousand were added to the church *the same day*. (Acts 2:41.)

So when his kind old father saw John coming, he ran out of the door, and down the steps, and through the gate as fast as his age would permit; and as John came up he threw his arms around him, fell upon his breast, and wept great hot tears of joy. "Oh,—John —my son," he sobbed, "how glad we are—so glad you have come back home!" And John wept too, leaning on his old father's shoulder. "Father," he

said, "I am no more worthy to be your son; let me be a servant." "No, my boy, never! We are too glad to have you back. Let by-gones be by-gones. Come in, for mother is waiting anxiously for you." And John was told to throw off his old rags, and put on clean new garments. And they put a ring on his finger, and killed the fatted calf, and had a joyful time, "For," said they, "the lost is found," and "the dead is made alive again."

Oh, the joy in that home where the lost are found! Dear lost friend, if you are sorry to-night, and like the prodigal can say, "I have determined to quit my meanness and quit right now;" and if you can come down this aisle and stand before the world and say, "I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and am willing, with all my heart and soul and strength to accept him as my personal Saviour, lovingly, heartily, sincerely and forever"—if you can do this there will be a glorious welcome for you in your Heavenly Father's House. God will take off your garments of wickedness and self-righteousness and put on you the new garments of forgiveness and love and peace. He will not let you be a servant of wickedness, but make you His heir and son. John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Oh, what a wonderful privilege to be a "child of the King!" What a wonderful privilege to become the recipient of that eternal life promised to the just made perfect!

Oh, then, come to-night, dear friend! Come with penitent heart and obey the Lord, and He will put in your mouth a new song; in your soul a new hope. He will fill your soul with that eternal peace which passeth all understanding. Repent now! Change for the better! You have been living a life of sin, but turn about face, to-night! Say, "Begone, Satan,

get thee behind me; Lord Jesus, take possession of my soul!" Come, and the angels will tune their golden harps anew and sweep o'er and o'er again their melodious strings with the glad songs of redeeming love. "There is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Oh, then, come now and let the news go home to glory that another lost soul is found, another dead heart is made alive again!

CONFESSION.

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10:10.

Confession, along with faith and repentance, is one step in conversion. It is, therefore, a subject of great importance.

Our people have been often and justly accused of preaching "faith, repentance and baptism." I am sorry the accusation does not include one item more. It ought to be said of us that we are a great folk to preach *faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.* It is true that we cannot be saved without faith; it is true that we cannot be saved without repentance; and it is just as true that we cannot be saved without confession. There is no possible way for a man to escape without it. Such is God's teaching all through the Scriptures. I am sorry that many of our preachers have neglected this subject so much. I feel that we ought to make it stand out in as bold relief as possible.

What do we mean by confession? "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth *confession* is made unto salvation." It is clear that we are to confess something before we can fully enter the heavenly way. What are we to confess? Are we to stand up before the world and confess that we believe the Bible? Before we become followers of the Lamb must we confess that we believe the Bible is true? I answer, No. That may surprise some of you; but listen. Are we to stand up and confess that

we believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that these three are one? I answer, No. This is not what is required in making the "good confession."

But some one says: "Don't you believe in God, and in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit? and don't you believe in the Bible?" Certainly. But affirming all this in separate allegations is not the confession we ask sinners to make. No religious body believes in God and His Word more earnestly and conscientiously than the Christian Church; but we do not ask sinners to confess what we believe. We do not ask them to believe in our theory of the atonement, or of regeneration, or of baptism. We do not read to them all the tenets of our belief and ask them to confess that they believe everything just as we do. No, this is not what the apostle meant by "confession unto salvation."

What, then, is THE CONFESSION? I answer that it is just simply this—no more, no less—*to openly and faithfully acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the son of God.*

"Is that all?"

No, it is not. I left out a very important part purposely, and will tell you why; a great many of our religious neighbors say that we do not believe in "heart-felt religion;" that we have "head-religion;" that we can beat all our opponents in a debate on baptism, and whip all the infidels; but that we lack genuine, old-fashioned, heart-felt religion. This is a very common criticism, but it is an unjust one. That is the reason I left out just now a very important part in the confession, and I now want every person here who has ever made that criticism to hear the confession we do ask sinners to make. Here it is: "DO YOU BELIEVE, WITH ALL YOUR HEART, THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD?" That is the

confession every man, woman and child must make before he can be received into the membership of the Christian Church. If there is a people on the face of the globe possessing the New Testament kind of heart-felt religion, that people is the Christian Church.

This is all there is to it. If a man honestly believes with *all his heart*—deep down in his immortal soul believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God—he also believes the Bible, for the great, central thought of the Bible is that God gave His Son to be the Saviour of men. He will also believe in the Holy Spirit, for Christ said He would send the Comforter. And he will believe in the atonement, in regeneration, in justification, adoption, heaven, hell, and everything else taught in the Book of God. The lordship of Christ—His sacrifice and subsequent assumption of universal power—is the one mighty sun of truth around which revolve all the stars of doctrine.

So if a sinner accepts Jesus Christ, he accepts all the rest. If he refuses to confess the divinity of Christ, no matter what else he accepts, he is lost! He might be baptized a thousand times; he might pray, give money, and weep bitter tears of penitence; but he cannot be saved so long as he denies the blood of Jesus. This is a common sin to-day, and it is not a new one. Nicodemus came to the Saviour by night and said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God"—he started out to deliver a very fine eulogy, but the Master cut him short, saying kindly but firmly, "Ye must be born again." Nicodemus was a man that no one should accept as a pattern. It pains me to hear him spoken of in laudatory words by some well-meaning people, for I don't think he ever became a Christian,—a real, true genuine follower of Jesus. I am no admirer of Nicodemus. He came to Jesus *at night*, evidently anxious to know

more of him; but he was not willing to come out openly and acknowledge him. He was not disposed to make the necessary confession. If he had done so he would have brought down upon his head the opprobrium of the Jewish people and lost his influence and popularity. He was very wealthy, and might have had to give up everything, as well as suffer persecution. He was not willing to sacrifice. Hence I consider him unworthy of being called a disciple of Jesus. True, he manifested a little sentimentality after the Saviour was crucified, in begging, with Joseph of Arimathea, the body of the Lord; but *sentimentality is far from being Christianity.*

Jesus said to him, "Ye must be born again." Nicodemus said, "How can a man be born again when he is old?" And Jesus replied, "You must be born of water and of the spirit." In other words, "You must come out openly, before the world, and make a complete surrender of self to me. You must take upon yourself the sacred vows of my religion, and give yourself wholly, unrelentingly to my service." Nicodemus was not willing to do this. I think he was very sorry, very penitent. But the Saviour demanded something more,—a public, heart-felt confession.

You can't be a Christian secretly, my friend. If you would please God you must come out publicly, openly, before the world and confess heart-felt faith in His Only Begotten Son.

Why? First of all, because God commands it. This ought to be enough even if there were no other reasons. When God speaks it is ours to obey. Let us look into the Word concerning this matter. Turn to Rom. 10:9, 10: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou

shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Here we see that in order to be saved, in order to have forgiveness of sins, in order to get into fellowship with the Father, in order to have that peace that passeth understanding, we must confess that Jesus is the Christ, for "with the mouth confession is made *unto* salvation," or *unto* the happy state of the Christian. The "good confession" is a preliminary step to this great end.

Turn again to Matt. 10:32-33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." In other words, "Whosoever shall stand up before the world and give himself to me completely, commit himself to my care and keeping, become my disciple, and, whenever occasion demands, confess me before the world, Him I will confess before my Father which is in heaven." Listen: "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." If we are afraid to confess Christ; if we neglect to stand up for Him; if we lead a careless and Godless life; if we fail to make that confession He demands of all men, the King of Glory will say, "I never knew you, depart from me into outer darkness."

Oh, my brother, it is a subject of tremendous importance. God has commanded us to confess His Holy Son, aud he means it. God never said anything that He did not mean—He never trifles with the hearts of men.

Turn now to the 8th Chapter of the Book of Acts. Here we have an account of Philip's preaching to the Ethiopian eunuch. The eunuch was reading in the Book of Esaias. The language was prophetical of Christ, and he didn't understand it. So he asked

Philip, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" In reply, the sacred writer says, "Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." And the eunuch believed. We don't know what all Philip said, but it is clearly evident that he said the eunuch must believe, and must repent of his sins, and must be baptized. We know this from legitimate inference. For before he met Philip the eunuch didn't know anything about Christ, much less the tenets of the gospel. And yet at the conclusion of the evangelist's instructions we find him requesting immediate baptism.

This leads me to say that no man can preach Christ fully and ignore the great subject of Christian baptism. It is quite popular with evangelists nowadays to hoot at this important matter as a "non-essential," but this is too bad, for no man can preach the gospel Scripturally and ignore baptism. The apostolic teachers always gave it its true place in conversion, and we should do likewise.

Well, did Philip baptize him without further comment. No. Why? Didn't he believe? Yes. Wasn't he sorry for his sins? Yes, or he would not have made that long journey to Jerusalem to worship. Wasn't he willing to be baptized? Yes, for he said earnestly, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" But Philip would not baptize him until he made the "good confession." He said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Upon this the anxious inquirer answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then he baptized him.

So I must declare unto you, friendly sinner, that you are not a fit candidate for Christian baptism, and you ought not to claim the promises of Heaven, until

you can intelligently, confidently, willingly, and whole-heartedly make an open confession of Christ. He commands it, and it must be done.

So much for the Scriptures on this subject. More passages might be cited, but these will suffice. One or two clearly stated proofs from the Book of God should be accepted by the believer as readily as forty or fifty. But sometimes I like to give a number of passages, for there is power in a preponderance of evidence.

In the second place, we should confess our Lord before the world because we owe it to His Church. Jesus gave his life's blood to sanctify his Church,—to set it up in the world that it might save the lost and unredeemed. Our Lord is not now here to save in person, but He can save just as surely through His Church as though He were here to touch us with his healing hand. We cannot be saved in the same manner as the thief on the cross. Some say, "If Jesus saved the thief on the cross without baptism, He will save me." But this is a gross presumption. You don't know but what the thief had been baptized under John's baptism. Before he entered the burglary business he may have been what is commonly called a very consistent Christian. (It would be incorrect to apply the term Christian to him, however, as there were no Christians, properly speaking, until afterwards.) He might once have been a very good man—religious, upright, a keeper of the law of Moses. And upon hearing the burning words of John the Baptist, he may, like thousands of others, have been baptized. Many people become dishonest and sinful after baptism, and this thief may belong to that class. But the true reason why we can't be saved like the thief on the cross, is that Jesus is not here in person, and we are not living with him under the Mosaic Dispen-

sation. He is not walking the streets of Chicago to-night as he walked the highways of Judea, and hence we cannot expect to be saved in the same way the thief on the cross was saved. I get tired of answering this senseless quibble, and feel like saying that if I were in your place I would want to be saved like an honest man anyhow, and not like a thief. An honest man is willing to comply with the Saviour's requirements without this sort of quibbling.

There is too much effort on the part of some religious enthusiasts to convey the impression that Jesus is here in person. He is not; but wherever His servants are, wherever the gospel is preached with hearts full of love, and wherever work is being done, the Saviour is there *in spirit*. The way He saves people to-day is not through his own personal ministry as he saved the thief and others, but through His Church. We are not under the old covenant, which was restricted to the Israelites; but under the new, which was sealed by the crucifixion blood of Christ, and which is universal. Hence I say we owe it to His Church to make the good confession; for in confessing our faith in Him we honor His Church. Oh, take your stand with the members of the church and help us battle against the enemies of light, the enemies of peace, the enemies of Christ. We are pleading—

"For the right against the wrong,
For the weak against the strong;
For the poor who've waited long
For the brighter age to be;
For the truth 'gainst superstition,
For the faith against tradition,
For the hope, whose glad fruition
Our waiting eyes shall see."

If there was ever a time in the history of Christianity when the church needed the confession of those who believe in Christ it is now. In our great

cities burdened with saloons, with gambling hells, with unclean places of resort; burdened with law-breakers and sacrilege of every kind—if there ever was a time the church needed the confession of all true men it is now. So come, and give it with all your heart. Give the church the recommendation, the devotion of your life. Delay not to make this good confession, for in so doing you will help in giving the church prestige among the unsaved; you will help it to run and be glorified!

In the third place, we owe it to our Divine Master to make this good confession. He has promised to confess us before the Father and His holy angels; this is a marvelous honor. And then to stand up before the world to-day and make this good confession is to receive honor of men. The individual who boldly and cheerfully confesses Christ is thought more of to-day than the man who does not. All things else being equal, the young man who is a Christian has the inside track in the great business world. The time is coming when the young man who is not upright, honest and moral can't get a first-class position, because business men know that the best policy is to employ honest, moral men to manage their affairs,—men who can be trusted. Yes, we owe it to Christ who hung on the cross in nakedness, and shame, and agony confessing us. It was a wonderful sacrifice to be offered up for such poor, unworthy creatures. But He loved us in our sins—loved us while we were yet His enemies—loved His persecutors—loved the unclean and the unredeemed. When they asked Him, "Are you the Christ?" He said, "I am;" and they crucified him for it. When he has done so much for us, it is as little as we can do to stand up and say, "I believe, and therefore will I serve Him—yea, with all my heart I acknowledge Him to be the Son

of the eternal Father—His precious gift to the world." It seems but reasonable that we should make this confession.

In the fourth place, we owe it to the world, if we really believe there is a God in Heaven and a satan in hell. If you really believe that the church has power to triumph over evil, and, under Christ, to transform demons of darkness into angels of light; if you really believe that the church is a good institution, and its services worthy of the attendance and support of all good people; if you really believe that God is a good Father, that Christ is a kind and loving Saviour, that the Holy Spirit is a tender Comforter, then you owe it to the world to make this confession, thus setting an example of obedience to noble principle.

Oh, if every one who *knew* their duty would only *do* their duty, it would not take long to revolutionize the world! But so many know what is right and neglect to do it; become indifferent, and go down to the grave unprepared to meet God. If there is a careless one here to-night, I beg of you to consider the importance of this great matter. Remember that the inspired writer says, "He that knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes."

The world demands that you *give it your best.* You know that this is so in every relation of life. If a man makes a great discovery in medicine, the world demands of him the fruits of his discovery. It does not insist upon the publicity of his recipe. It would not be wise for him to tell everybody just how his panacea is made, for that would be suicidal policy. Some find fault with Mr. Keeley because he don't tell everybody his remedy which is working such great results in the cure of the drunkard. But I think his

course is a wise one. Human nature is so constituted that if he should make public his secret it would soon fail to do anybody good. In six months there would be few using it. Men usually like to pay for what they get. So Mr. Keeley keeps his remedy a secret, charges a good fee for its application, and shows the world much good fruit. I sometimes think that if we charged $50 a head for joining the church we would soon double our list of members! It costs from $25 to $100 to join the leading lodges, and they catch their thousands annually. So possibly if we would charge a good round fee to join the church some of these fellows would be caught!

When a man makes a great discovery he owes it to the world to give his fellows the benefit of it. When Sir Isaac Newton made his great discovery of the laws of gravitation, he owed it to the world to give human thought the benefit of it. And so with Fulton, Watts, Whitney, Edison and every other man who makes a discovery. He owes its results to the world. And so if you know the gospel to be a good thing; if you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that He is able to save to the uttermost all who put their trust in Him, you owe it to your friend, to your neighbor, and to all mankind about you to make the good confession.

In the last place, and in some respects the most important of all, we owe it to ourselves to confess Christ. Young man, if you believe, you owe it to yourself to make the good confession; for in so doing you commit yourself once for all to the highest, best and noblest work of human life. The time when you came forward before the world and linked your life with Christ, in future years will be considered the beginning of an enlarged manhood; the opening to you of the grandest type of earthly progress. Yes, you

owe it to yourself to acknowledge the sovereignty of Christ over your soul. There are many men reeling home drunk to-night; others sitting at the card table playing games; some engaged in burglary, or fighting and carousing, who might be good, upright men, sitting in their own homes, surrounded by happy families, reading good books, if twenty years ago they had stood up before the world and earnestly, lovingly confessed their faith in the Son of God. Such a noble self-commitment would have kept them pure, and divine love would have been thrown about their hearts in such a way as to save them from the temptations that they have yielded to all these years, and from the sins which are dragging them down to hell. Oh, my brother, if you know your duty to-night, I beg you to do it! This may be your last opportunity. If we let these golden privileges pass, we will soon be sorry, so sorry. I think the saddest and most suggestive words ever written by the poet Whittier, are these: "It might have been."

"I had a good start," says one, "a good, kind father and mother, dear brothers and sisters; everything was bright at the old fireside. But I entered the wrong way, and have been going down, down all my life. Now all my chances are gone, my friends have deserted me, and I am going hellward as fast as I can go there!" There are thousands of men in this country in that condition to-day. If they had only started in the right way, if they had only committed themselves to Christ, they would have been happy and prosperous now. Yes, young man, and young lady, you owe it to yourselves and to your loved ones to make this good confession. If you truly believe, you owe it to the Church, you owe it to God, you owe it to the world, and you owe it to yourself to openly avow your faith.

But when? *Right now.* If you don't make confession to-night, you may let to-morrow pass; you may let Sunday pass; and oh! you may let this series of meetings close without altering your unsaved condition. We can't *compel* you—if I could, and it were God's way of doing things, I would compel every man, woman and child in this building to make the good confession, for I know it would benefit you both temporally and eternally; but I can't do that. No; for our Lord's religion is a peaceful religion; and His warfare is a bloodless warfare. We can't go out with swords and bayonets and guns and force men to accept Christ. I can't go down these aisles and by main strength compel you to do your duty. If our arguments fail; if our efforts to stir your affections fail; if our appeals to your will fail—if all these means God has given us with which to move you to obedience fail, then we will have to let you go on in your sins.

But I must say the time is coming when you will *have* to confess Christ. After these matters are all taken out of human hands the time will come when you will be *compelled* to do your duty. Turn to Philippians 2:9-11: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus Christ *every knee should bow*, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that *every tongue should confess* that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Oh, when that great day comes, the Day of Judgment, you can't hide from the Eternal One! There will be no place under the earth or above the earth where you can hide from the wrath of your Creator. Some will be so scared that they will call for the mountains to fall on them and the hills to hide them that they may escape the

vengeance of God, but their cries will not be heeded. If after all the tender provisions He has made for you His commandments are ignored, He will drag you from your lair of wickedness, from your dens of vice, and from your hiding places of shame and compel you to stand before the bar of Judgment. There, in the presence of all the nations gathered together from the four quarters of the earth, you will *have* to kneel and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of all.

Then why not make it voluntarily? A volunteer soldier is always the best kind of a soldier. Don't wait to be drafted! Come out here at the rallying camp of the host of God and enlist of your own free will and accord! Join the march of the brave, and fight the good fight of faith, the fight of the valiant soldier, and at the last day you can go up gladly to the grand review of heaven and receive the Great Captain's welcome, "Well done, good and faithful soldier!"

The best men in the world's history have been the men who acknowledged the sovereignty of Christ—have moved the world Godward. Mr. Gladstone states that during the long years of his premiership he came in contact with sixty master minds, and all but five were Christians. The leading patriots of all nations and ages have been worshipers of the God of the Christian's Bible. The greatest jurists of history were Christians. The greatest poets have been Christians. The greatest painters have been Christians. And the greatest pieces of music have been composed under Christian inspiration,—Handel's "Messiah," for instance, and the great pieces of Hayden, Mozart, Mendelssohn, and the rest. The subjects of the world's greatest painters, as well as its greatest musical compositions, are taken from the Bible. Those who have had the most to do with the development of mankind have been followers of Jesus.

So why should you hesitate to step into line? Oh, I beg of you to-night to fall into the ranks of the Redeemer and help us in the great work of carrying the glad message of redeeming love to the uttermost parts of the earth! I plead with you, dear friend, to come forward and publicly acknowledge, from the depths of your heart, your belief in the only begotten Son of God. If you will make that confession to-night, He will confess you before the Father, and the angels of glory will rejoice! Come now, and let there be a glad chorus in heaven to-night over the salvation of many precious souls.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Text: "Consistency, thou art a jewel."

Christian Baptism is one of the most commonly discussed subjects in the world; a subject upon which there is a great deal of controversy, arguing pro and con, and con and pro; but like Banquo's ghost, 'it will not down.' Well, whatever else may be said of it, *it is not a dry subject* anyway; so I will probably be able to keep you awake to-night if I don't do anything else.

At a good many places my friends are afraid for me to preach on Baptism. They think it will keep the people away. But they soon see their mistake, for I usually have very large audiences when I speak on this subject. This is just as it should be, for it is a subject the people want to know more about; it is a subject that ought to be discussed Scripturally, and in such a way that the common people as well as the more highly educated can understand it.

First of all then, we will appeal to the Bible, and secondly, to the testimony of the great scholars in the world, and see if we can learn the truth concerning this great doctrinal subject. I trust my hearers will be very kind, and very thoughtful to-night. There are several hundred here who agree with me, and several hundred who, I suppose, do not. I take it for granted that you are all honest in your convictions. If you are not honest, heaven pity you. Life is too short for us to be anything but honest upon every subject connected with the soul's salvation. So

I want you all to be honest, and if you find yourself to be wrong, have principle enough in you to acknowledge it, and place yourself henceforth on the side of right. Hear my plea attentively and prayerfully, and I think I can easily convince you that our people are right in their views concerning this important matter, for our views are in exact accord with the Bible, and with the highest scholarship of the world.

Right here I want you to take a good look at this little chart:—[See page 147.]

A certain revivalist was once conducting meetings at Manhattan, Kansas, and Professor Thomson, one of our brethren, attended. One day the Professor invited the evangelist to dine with him, and when the opportunity presented itself he put to the preacher this question: "When inquiring sinners ask you what to do to be saved, why don't you quote Acts 2:38—'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins?' This was the inspired apostle Peter's language to seekers. Why don't you quote it?" The evangelist replied, "The truth is, Brother Thomson, that I fear the people would not come back to hear me." Now I want to say to you people, if you are silly enough to be offended at me for preaching the truth, you may go! If you are silly enough to come here to hear me preach and then get mad when I quote the Word of God, you may stay away. People of that kind are naturally bound ruin-ward anyway, and the sooner they arrive there the better perhaps for human development. Certainly, let us be honest and honorable, and consider all sides of this subject. As for me, whatever God has commanded me to preach, I am going to preach it when I have a chance, whether the people come back to hear me or not, for above all

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

I. WHAT IS BAPTISM?	Matt. 28:18,19.	A positive, divine commandment.
	Mark 16:15,16.	" " "
	Acts 2:38.	" " "
II. WHAT IS IT FOR?	John 3:3-5.	Entrance into the Kingdom.
	Acts 22:16.	Washing away of sin.
	Gal. 3:27.	Putting on Christ.
	I. Pet. 3:19-21.	Salvation.
	Acts 2:38.	Remission of sin.
III. WHO MAY BE BAPTIZED?	Acts 16:14,15.	Hearts opened of the Lord.
	Acts 8:12.	Both men and women.
	Acts 18:8.	Hear, believe, obey.

IV. HOW MUST WE BAPTIZE?	Matt. 3:5,6.	Immersion?	Yes.	Sprinkling or Pouring?	"	No.
	Mark 1:9-11.	"	Yes.	"	"	No.
	John 3:23.	"	Yes.	"	"	No.
	Col. 2:12.	"	Yes.	"	"	No.
	Rom. 6:3,4.	"	Yes.	"	"	No.
	Acts 8:36-39.	"	Yes.	"	"	No.

V. GOD'S WARNING AND PROMISE.	Rev. 22:18,19.	Additions or subtractions alike dangerous.
	Rev. 22:14.	Obedience the only safe course.

things else I desire to please my Heavenly Father. A brave man will not be afraid to preach the truth, and it will not cost him his crowds either. For a number of years I have been following this plan, and my audiences have usually been measured by the capacity of the buildings where I have preached. And it is not owing to my superior education or talent, for I am an humble man in these respects; but because I have spoken plainly, fearlessly, and lovingly the TRUTH.

If the simple truth concerning Christian Baptism were preached clearly and unequivocally by evangelical churches generally; if the ordinance were given its divinely appointed place in the scheme of redemption, I believe we would have ten converts to Christianity where we have one to-day.

Notice that motto at the top of the chart: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thes. 5:21.)

These words were written by the Apostle Paul, the greatest of all the apostles, and one of the greatest defenders of the Gospel the world has ever known. It was one of his mottoes, and is certainly worthy of your acceptance and mine. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." If you can't prove a given position to be scriptural, why, be scholarly and consistent, and give it up. Don't be theological leeches and hold fast to everything your ecclesiastical authorities teach, whether true or not; but be consistent, and let go of everything you can't sustain by the Bible. If faith is right, let us be able to prove it, and then hang on to it. So with repentance, and immersion. If we can't prove immersion, we don't ask any one to hold fast to it. If we can't prove that God wants you to be baptized, then we will not ask you to submit to the ordinance. If there is anything

we believe in, it is in proving our position by the Scriptures. Some churches are afraid to have their doctrines inquired into closely; but you can't please the Christian Church better than to investigate its belief and practice.

Here is our second motto at the bottom of the chart—"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." You will find this in the fourth chapter of Peter's First Epistle, eleventh verse. In plain language the inspired apostle enjoins us to speak like the Bible; to tell the world what God says. We are not to speak like some synod, some association, some conference, some council, or some theological assembly; but like the oracles of God. What man speaks is feeble. What we accept as settled to-day, to-morrow we often reject as an error. Four hundred years ago everybody thought the world was as flat as a pancake; but nobody with common sense thinks so to-day. Astronomy has proven to us that the world is oval. So in the theological world men cut and dry this and that for all time and for all people; but in a few generations their deductions are weighed in the balance of a greater enlightenment and found wanting. But God's Word is for all time and all people and can never be out of date. So the way for us to speak is as the oracles of God speak. If we can prove our doctrines from the Bible, very well. If not, they should be discarded once for all.

Now I will ask for you a few simple questions, and request you to observe their answers closely.

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN BAPTISM? WHAT IS IT FOR? WHO ARE TO BE BAPTIZED? HOW MUST WE BAPTIZE? GOD'S WARNING AND PROMISE

Now look here, I don't want you to tell me what you *think* about this question. I wouldn't give three straws for what you think, and you wouldn't give

two for what I think perhaps. We are not after *man's think so's*, but *God's say so's*. The world is sick and tired of mere opinion. One person says, "I think baptism is an outward form of an inward grace." Another that it is "a mere form." Still another opines something else, and so it goes. But the honest inquirer wants to know what God's Book has to say about it. So we will turn to its sacred pages and see.

Concerning the first question, What is Baptism? we will notice three passages:—

(1) Matt. 28:18, 19. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." These are among the very last words our Saviour spoke. It was just before his ascension to the right hand of the Father. Turning to Peter and the other apostles as He stood talking with them, He made this important declaration: "All authority and power, both in heaven and earth, is given unto me." It is well for us to remember, in the light of these words, that all power and authority is not given to theological councils, whether of Roman or Protestant extraction. All power is not given to the pope of Rome, nor to the bishops of Protestantism. But all power, all authority, is given to Christ. It was a risen conqueror who uttered these words, and He meant what He said. When the Lord speaks, it is ours to hear most reverently. Almost the last words of Jesus were: "Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." We argue, therefore, that baptism is a *positive, divine commandment of God*, and not a "non-essential," a "mere ceremony," or "church ordinance." It is a

commandment, and is intended for obedience as much as faith or repentance.

(2) Mark 16:15, 16. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." I once heard of a preacher who did not believe baptism essential, and when taking this passage as a text he would read:—"He that believeth, *etc.*, shall be saved!" But we should read it just as it is. The word "*etc.*" is not in the passage. "He that believeth *and is baptized* shall be saved," said the master. And there is no promise of heaven to any man, woman or child of accountability except they shall comply with these divine requirements. Hope of salvation is extended to-day only to those who believe and are baptized. Here are the conditions of salvation and unless accepted we have no right to expect the Gates of Pearl to open for our disobedient feet. The Lord has made baptism a positive commandment, and He certainly means that we shall keep it faithfully. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to *every creature.*" Aren't you a creature? Yes. Then your duty is to believe and be baptized. Do not try to shrink from your duty by unhallowed quibblings.

(3) Acts 2:37, 38. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts." This was on the day of Pentecost, you remember, ten days after the Saviour had ascended to heaven, and according to promise the Holy Spirit was poured out upon Peter and the other apostles, and they began to speak with tongues, and were enabled to perform wonderful miracles. Peter stood up and delivered the great sermon epitomized in this second chapter of the Book of Acts. He told them they had taken Jesus, the Mes-

siah, and with wicked hands had crucified and slain Him. Peter was very personal. In our day some people don't like personalities—it hurts the conscience! He told them plainly that they were cruel murderers, and declared that they had nailed the Son of God to the tree. He reasoned with them, bringing forth unanswerable proofs from the prophecies, and from the marvelous life and words of the Nazarene. The result was that many truly believed, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Now what did Peter answer? Oh, listen as for eternity! Speaking by the inspiration of God, he said: "Repent, *and be baptized*, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Yes, here it is, as plain and emphatic as words can make it—"REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED." The apostle did not say, "Repent, *etc.*" He did not say Repentance alone, for we are saved by both. How many of our auditors to-night think repentance necessary? Every one of you. Very well; He taught the necessity of baptism in the same sentence, and God meant that every man, woman and child of accountable age on the face of the globe should comply with both requirements. Baptism is as much a positive, divine commandment as repentance. With Peter there was no equivocation on the subject. He did not assert that baptism "didn't amount to anything," or that it was only an "outward sign of an inward grace," or a "mere ceremony," or that it was "purely a church ordinance." No, no, Peter was no juggler with the Word of God. He spoke boldly just as the Spirit gave him utterance. We are taught that Christian baptism is a positive, divine commandment, to be faithfully kept unto salvation. Whosoever says otherwise teaches what is unscriptural and untrue. Who-

soever says it is a "non-essential" says what is not true, for God never commanded a non-essential. It is an act of loyalty—it is the seal of pardon—it is the cap-sheaf of conversion.

But WHAT IS IT FOR? There must be good reasons for it, for God never asks us to do anything unreasonable. But as this is a very critical and exacting age, it is fitting that preachers should make clear the design of baptism when pressing its essentiality. So let us notice five passages of Scripture concerning this matter.

First, John 3:4. "Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus came to the Master by night, and said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him." But Christ said, "Ye must be born again." Now I think Nicodemus wanted to retain his place among the Jews, and partake of the fruit of the Nazarene's ministry at the same time. But Christ said, "You must take a public stand for me. I cannot accept mere night service. My followers must come out openly and above board in their profession if they would gain my favor, for I say unto you most emphatically that unless one be *born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" Now it does not say, "Except ye be born of the *Spirit alone.*" I have heard of preachers declaring that "water" doesn't mean water at all in this instance, but Spirit. But there is an old rule which insists that in the substitution of one word for another, the word substituted must make sense when

read in connection with the rest of the sentence. Let us apply this rule right here: "Except a man be born of *spirit* and of the Spirit!" What consummate foolishness! I heard a prominent Y. M. C. A. worker express his belief that the word "water" here means *Word*. But all the great authorities of the scholastic world are against him. The truth is that when Jesus said "water," he meant *water*. The best commentators declare that this passage has reference to Christian Baptism,—a birth of the water and of the Spirit. The natural, practical interpretation of the passage, therefore, is that "except a man submit to this ordinance of Heaven he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Beware, then, lest in neglecting it you fall short of your reward.

Again, Acts 22:16. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." This was said to Saul of Tarsus. You remember that he was on his way to Damascus, when he saw a wonderful vision, and heard the voice of Jesus saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Smitten with conviction he cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The Saviour said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." (Acts 9:6.) He arose and went, one of his companions leading him, as he could not see. And after three days Ananias went over to his lodging place, being bidden of the Lord. Paul had been praying, but had not yet received pardon and peace, for God never saves by prayer alone. At no place in the Divine Book has He promised to forgive any man, woman or child by prayer, so long as they remain alien sinners. The CHRISTIAN who, through faith and obedience, has come into contact with the blood of Christ, receives forgiveness through confession and prayer;

but those who have never accepted Christ cannot consistently claim this sweet privilege. So Ananias visited Saul, and soon learned that he was a *believing* man, a *penitent* man, a *confessing* man (for had he not, when smitten in the way, acknowledged the divinity of Christ?) and a *sincere* man, for he had evidently been praying for forgiveness day and night. Now what did Ananias tell him to do? Note carefully, for it is of God:—"Why tarriest thou? Arise and *be baptized* and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Hence we see from this passage that Christian Baptism is *for*, or *in order to*, the washing away of sins.

Again, Gal. 3:27. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." We see from this reference that baptism is *for*, or *in order to* the *putting on of Christ.* Figuratively, when we become Christians we put off the filthy rags of sin, and put on the shining cloak of righteousness. Hence Paul refers to baptism as the *putting on of Christ.* This is no light matter, but an act affecting the soul's present and eternal happiness.

Once more, take 1 Peter 3:19,20,21. "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." I will venture there are 500 people in this audience who did not know these words were in the Bible—"*saved by water*," and "*the like figure whereunto baptism does now save us.*" But here they are, and if we are honest we will accept them and

govern ourselves accordingly. Those who really believe the Word of God and love the Lord with all their hearts do not quibble over the essentiality of this holy ordinance. The apostle Peter, writing under inspiration, declares that baptism saves us, but not by putting off the filth of the flesh. When we baptize people, it is not to literally wash away their sins, as the hands are cleansed by dipping them in a basin of water. Peter says, "It is the answer of a good conscience toward God." It becomes so because it is an act of obedience to the law of our Redeemer. This act is the answer, or the complement to, a good conscience toward God. I can't see how any one trying to be a Christian, and not having been baptized, can have a good conscience toward God. Of course baptism alone cannot save us, any more than faith alone or prayer alone. But as we have no hope of salvation without faith and prayer, neither can we have without baptism, for the apostle here tells us plainly that it is *for*, or *in order unto* salvation, and the answer of a good conscience toward God.

Let us refer to Acts 2:38 once more, as it also bears on the design of baptism. Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you." What for, Peter? Why did God command them to be baptized? "*For the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." That is what baptism is for,—"for the remission of sins." The great Baptist Church, nearly four millions strong counting its several branches, is identical with the Disciples in their belief and practice as to the *act* of baptism; (they are a good people, God bless them!) but they are wrong as to the design, for they think their sins are remitted when they repent and believe, and pray. Then at some convenient time they are admitted to baptism, not as an act to secure forgiveness for sin, but merely

as a church ordinance. The New Version is even clearer than the Old on this verse. It has it, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ *unto* the remission of sins." This rendering permits no quibbling on the Greek preposition *eis*. It shows that we are to be baptized, not because our sins have been forgiven, but *for* or *in order unto* the remission of sins. According to this Scripture no man, woman, or child of accountability has any promise of forgiveness until he is baptized.

We pass on to the next question, which is a very interesting one:—

WHO MAY BE BAPTIZED?

Says the Lutheran Church, "Everybody, men, women and children." So say the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and I don't know how many other denominations. Let *everybody* come; if some are too young to come of their own accord, their folks may bring them, for they should be baptized. The little tots may kick and squirm, but what right have they to protest against the whims of their seniors? Bring them anyway! But we are getting into the domain of human opinions. We must call a halt, for there is no time for mere "think so's," no time to paddle around man's theological ponds. We should dispense with human creeds. I sometimes think that creeds have sent more souls to hell than to heaven. It has been asserted, and I think upon good authority, that Calvinism is largely responsible for the infidelity of Bob Ingersoll. His father was a Calvinistic preacher, and instead of preaching a pure gospel, he preached an alloyed one, a gospel tinctured with the monstrous doctrine of infant damnation, and other hideous fallacies. It is not strange that his boy re-

volted at so distorted a view of Christianity. If we would let God speak, and have done with man's little prejudices as expressed in modern creeds, there would not be one skeptic where there are ten to-day.

Who, then, according to the Word of God, are to be baptized? Answer, *Only penitent believers.* This forever excludes infants and idiots. We do not baptize infants, because they have nothing, in the first place, to be penitent of; and in the second place, because their mental faculties are not sufficiently developed to enable them to believe. Only penitent believers are fit subjects for Christian Baptism. Mr. Ingersoll is not, for he don't believe. The young man who laughs and scoffs at religion is not; for he is without faith, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The man who believes, but is not sorry for his sins, is not a fit candidate for Christian Baptism, for he is not penitent. A man must honestly believe, and thoroughly repent before he can be a fit candidate for Christian Baptism. Notice Acts 16:14, 15. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the City of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." If we really want to know what God wants us to do to be saved, we will go back and find out what the inspired apostles taught the people,—what Paul, and Peter, and Philip preached to the people. Here we learn that the Lord "opened the heart" of Lydia, and she was forthwith baptized, together with her household. They were already worshiping people, but not saved, for they were out of Christ. When Paul declared the story of the cross to them,

their hearts were opened,—in other words, they penitently believed, and were willing to obey the commandments of the Lord. Only those whose hearts have been opened of the Lord are Scripturally entitled to Christian Baptism. And allow me to say right here that there is nothing miraculous about this heart-opening, for in the Scriptural use of the words, "mind" and "heart" mean the same thing. In this passage the word "heart" does not mean the organ in the left side of the body. People sometimes pray, "Lord, take away this cold, stony heart and give me a warm heart of flesh," as if God would perform a physiological miracle in conversion! Happily such prayers are not answered literally. You don't *think* down here in your left side, do you? No, and the Lord doesn't open your fleshy heart, but your *mind*, your *reason*, your *affections*, your *inmost soul*. That is what He does when you accept His truth through the preached word. It was through the Word of God, as it was faithfully preached by Paul, that the heart of Lydia was opened. And when your heart is opened, it will be in the same way. Then, and not till then, will you be a fit subject for Christian Baptism.

Let us also notice Acts 8:12. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

Were there any babies baptized, Professor Hutto?

Hutto: "It doesn't say anything about it."

No, you are right. It says "both men and women," but no babies. Now it seems to me that if we are going by the Bible we ought to observe this passage critically. There were undoubtedly among Philip's auditors many infants, but he didn't baptize one of them. It certainly was not considered necessary, or this grand man of God would have attended to it. In

the case of Lydia's household some think there are grounds for the practice of infant baptism, but as there is not a shadow of evidence anywhere to prove that Lydia had any children, or, if she had, that they were not matured, this assumption is vain. Only those who penitently believe the preached word, as did the Samaritans under Philip, can be fit subjects for Christian Baptism.

Again, Acts 18:8. "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." The babies didn't hear. No, babies can't "hear" in the Scriptural sense. They hear the voice of mamma, or the roar of thunder, or the thrilling notes of pleasant music; but their little mental faculties are not yet acute enough to interpret the meaning of all this. They hear as animals hear, not as individuals capable of weighing, considering, and deciding with intelligence. Idiots, who are not responsible, and infants, who are undeveloped, and withal spotlessly pure anyhow, are not subjects for Christian Baptism.

There is not a single instance of infant baptism in the New Testament. I will make another offer: I will give $50.00 to any man who will find me one single instance where Christ or any of his apostles ever commanded or practiced infant baptism. Some of my hearers doubtless believe in it, practice it, but you do so utterly without Scriptural warrant. The great Henry Ward Beecher said, "I practice infant sprinkling, because I think it is a good thing, and not because the New Testament commands it." Yet now and then we hear of some little popinjay of a preacher jumping up to remark that the Bible teaches infant sprinkling, and citing in proof of his position some of the instances of household baptisms. He

thinks that because a whole household was baptized, of course there must have been some babies there. But is this a necessary inference? There has been a whole household lately added to this church, a father and mother, and an only child who is old enough to believe and obey. There are thousands of households in this world where there are no infants. Infant baptism is a hollow mockery, the offspring of papacy, and it is a matter for rejoicing that the custom is rapidly losing ground among the more intelligent Protestants of the age. The babe in its sweet innocence needs no priestly attentions. And as for consecrating it to the Lord, every parent should do that before it is born. If your little one dies unbaptized, don't imagine it will go to perdition because the preacher didn't christen it. Jesus says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." He would not have said this if our babies were considered little sinners. When they grow up to accountability, and become penitent believers in Christ, then, and not till then, will they be fit subjects for Christian Baptism.

We now come to what is perhaps the most interesting portion of this discussion:—

How are we to baptize?

"Well, it doesn't make any difference," says one. "You can sprinkle, or pour, or immerse," and I heard of one preacher who simply touched the forehead of his candidates with the tips of his fingers. So here are four different styles offered us, and over in Kansas I attended a revival service one night conducted by a still more liberal fellow. At the close of his meeting he had a lot of people to be baptized, and he gave them their choice as to the mode (so-called) of baptism. So they went down to the river and he sprinkled some, and a

few he poured, and a few more he immersed (or rather he pushed them over in the water, as some preachers do who do not believe in the necessity of immersion); and a few he dipped three times. And then there were some who didn't believe in water baptism at all, whom he commended to the Friends, where they preached Holy Ghost baptism only. So here were five different varieties of baptism, so-called. Certainly Kansas leads!

I have in my library a little black book, which officially represents one of the largest Protestant bodies of America. On page 42 I find these words:— "Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice of either sprinkling, pouring or immersion." But I do not find any such language in the Bible. God never authorized sprinkling or pouring for Christian Baptism, and it is presumptuous for any people to place these human enactments on a level with immersion, the divinely appointed way. Not one of the apostles ever practiced pouring or sprinkling, for it was not thought of until 250 years after the dawn of the Christian era. Then it was introduced in cases of death-bed repentance. At first they poured a large quantity of water upon the individual wishing baptism, perhaps several gallons. Then less and less as the years rolled by, until a quart was deemed sufficient, and finally a few drops. But not until the year 1311, at the Roman Catholic Council of Ravenna, were sprinkling and pouring ecclesiastically recognized as equally valued with immersion. So those who teach and practice sprinkling and pouring do so on their own authority, and they ought not to try to substantiate their position by quotations from the Bible. The Catholics are more consistent in the matter than the Protestants. They sprinkle and pour by the authority of the pope,

who they think has power to change the form of baptism, or anything else he wishes changed from the apstolic order. Every intelligent archbishop, bishop, or learned priest in this great city will tell you that immersion was the ancient form of baptism, but the Council of Ravenna changed it. But the Greek Catholics have never yet degenerated to this custom, but universally practice immersion for Christian Baptism. As the church is nearly 100,000,000 strong, and uses the language in which the New Testament was originally promulgated, we have in their attitude an invincible argument in favor of immersion. If Protestants must sprinkle and pour, let them give Romanists credit for the innovation, and not endeavor to uphold the practice by distorting the Word of God.

But how are we to baptize? What do the Scriptures teach? Let us read first, Matt. 3:5,6. "Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of Him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Yes, all the region round about Jordan,—hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands of people, turned out to hear John preach. He was clothed in camel's hair and wore a leather girdle about his loins, and his food was locusts and wild honey. He probably had a stump or a stone for a pulpit, away out in the wilderness. Very clearly, very plainly, very sharply he spoke to them, and hundreds and thousands were baptized, because his language impressed them, and because the demands of that language made them want to forsake their sins. They were baptized *in Jordan*, which indicates immersion.

Mark 1:8-11. "I indeed have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John

in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the Heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him: And there came a voice from heaven saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Oh, I love to read the account of how our Master came from His home in Nazareth, and went to John to be baptized. But John said, "No, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" And Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he suffered him, and He went down into the water and came up straightway out of the water, and as He came up the Spirit of God lighted upon Him and a voice said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Listen! The first time God ever by audible voice acknowledged Jesus to be His only begotten Son was at His baptism. And the first time you or I have the right to claim to be sons of God is when, like Jesus, we are baptized. He was our example in all things. He went *down into the water*, and *came up straightway out of the water*. Immersion alone can satisfy the demands of this passage.

John 3:23. "And John also was baptizing in Ænon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized." What was he baptizing at Ænon for? Because there was *much water* there. "Well, they wanted that water for culinary purposes," says one. How do you know so much when you perhaps have never been out of your own state, much less visited the Holy Land? I think that is begging the question; those who resort to the culinary dodge in this instance are certainly in sore straits for an argument. No, John was baptizing at Ænon because the water was of sufficient depth there to do it right. He was burying the people beneath

its shining waves. We see that immersion is the only action that meets the demands of this language.

Colossians 2:12. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." How do you bury anything? Do you sprinkle or pour just a little dirt over it? Oh, no! You overwhelm it, you put it under, you cover it up. You see immersion is demanded by the language of this text.

I am reminded of a little incident. You know Baptist preachers always immerse when they baptize at all, and yet Doctor McArthur of New York says that Baptists let more people die unbaptized than any other, because they don't believe it essential to salvation. It is strange to me that if not essential, they should be so particular as to require baptism in order to church membership. According to the logic of their own theory it is easier to go to Heaven than to join the Baptist Church. And then, if baptism is not essential anyhow, why be so particular about its action? This is too much like a nice cow giving a good pail of milk and then kicking it over.—Well, to the story. Once upon a time a Baptist preacher preached to the Indians, and immersed a great many of them. After a while a Methodist preacher came along and labored in the same territory. He was quite energetic, full of life and enthusiasm, and quite a number came into his church on six months' "suspicion," among the number one big fellow from the Baptist brother's flock. The day finally came to take them into full membership, and the preacher prepared to sprinkle them. On such occasions they have a whole lot of stuff they have to read, you know; he read, and the candidates came forward, this big red man with the rest. When the minister had finished

reading his little Discipline, he brought out a bowl of water, and signaled to his converts to make ready. The big Indian said, "What you going to do with that bowl of water, my friend?"

"I am going to baptize you."

"Oh, no!" said the candidate, "me can't get in that bowl—me too big."

The Indian understood that baptism was a *burial*, and he knew very well that an Indian weighing two hundred pounds could never be buried in a quart of water.

Romans 6:3-5. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also shall walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." We see from this reference that baptism is a *burial*, a *planting*. How do you plant anything? Lay it on top of the ground, and then come around and wonder why the thing don't grow? No, you put it under the ground, and after a while the seed dies and a little sprout comes up. In like manner we plant, or bury, the "old man," the man of sin, in the watery grave, and he comes forth a new creature,—born again "of the water and the Spirit,"—born for a new, higher and better life. Immersion only can satisfy the demands of this beautiful passage.

I recall another incident. It is a trifle rough on sprinkling, but it puts things in a way you will not soon forget. You may forget me, but I do not want you to forget the truth I bring you; hence I use every legitimate means I can to clinch what I say.—An old preacher was once sprinkling a baby and during the

service he read Rom. 6:4. ("Therefore we are buried with him by baptism.") Then he put a little water on the head of the child. After meeting he went home. Tommy, his bright young hopeful, accompanied him.

"Now don't be too sarcastic, Brother Hall," I imagine somebody saying. Well, sprinkling and pouring scarcely deserve anything but ridicule in this enlightened age. You don't like sarcasm? Ah, that usually depends entirely on whose side the sarcasm is presented. And I must say if ever any church was ridiculed on account of the firm stand we have taken on this subject, the Christian Church has been; but when we come back with the same shot and shell it is all wrong! But we have good examples in the Scriptures for the employment of sarcasm,—Elijah, for instance, at the trial on Mount Carmel.

Well, the old minister sat down in his study to prepare for his evening sermon. As he was pondering, he happened to look out of the window, and to his surprise and regret saw that "old Aunt Rhody," the pet gray goose, was dead.

"Tommy," called he, "you see the old gray goose is dead."

"Yes," said Tommy.

"Well, go bury the goose, my son."

"All right," said Tommy.

He went out and dragged her down into the orchard, and looking around with a sparkle in his eye, he picked up a handful of dirt and solemnly sprinkled it on the head of the poor old fowl. Meanwhile the old gentleman was absorbed in his cogitations. But presently he looked up, and, wiping his spectacles, he saw, to his amazement, the old goose lying there unburied.

"Tommy, come here!" he cried. "Didn't I tell you to bury the goose?"

"Yes—yes sir. I—I did, father."

"Why, you didn't either, you little scoundrel. Will you presume not only to disobey, but to lie to your old father? Look! Do not mine eyes behold the goose?"

"Well, father, I buried the goose just like you buried that little baby this morning."

Out upon the inconsistency, the incongruity, the mockery of calling sprinkling a burial! Would to God that men might learn to exercise common sense in matters of religion.

Acts 8:36, 37, 38. "And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Yes—the eunuch was reading over in the Old Testament in the prophecy of Isaiah, but he did not comprehend what he was reading. So an angel spake to Philip and told him to go and join himself to the chariot of the euunch. He went, and "preached to him Jesus." Oh, for more Jesus-preaching to-day! This man evidently knew nothing about Jesus or His doctrine and yet we find him in a little while requesting baptism. The only way to account for this is that Philip had preached to him the necessity of Christian Baptism. And I want to say that no man can preach Jesus completely, comprehensively, faithfully, unless he does preach baptism, for it is one of Jesus' commandments.

After he had preached Jesus, the eunuch said, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized." And Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart,

thou mayest." The eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And he stopped the chariot, and with Philip went right down into the water and was baptized, whereupon he went on his way rejoicing.

With these humble hands I have immersed hundreds of penitent believers, and I have yet to hear one say, "I am sorry." No, they all go on their way rejoicing, for it is right. Not one of the large number who have been immersed during our meetings will ever be dissatisfied with their baptism. But, oh, how many who are sprinkled or poured become dissatisfied! Let me put the question right here: How many of my auditors present were at one time sprinkled or poured but afterwards became dissatisfied with the same, and sought immersion? (A large number raised their hands.)

Now let me put it the other way:—How many of you, who at any time in your life were immersed, became dissatisfied with it, feared it was not Scriptural, and sought sprinkling or pouring? Not a single hand goes up! In a preponderance of evidence there is conviction. Actions speak louder than words. There are millions of people in this country who will not accept any other form of baptism than immersion. On the other hand the millions who accept sprinkling and pouring, also accept immersion. For God's sake and for humanity's sake, why can't our Pedo-baptist friends throw away their affusion and practice only that which everybody knows to be right? It would be a mighty step in the direction of Christian union.

But I recall another story. It is very clear that immersion only can satisfy the demands of the language used by Luke in describing the eunuch's baptism. And yet there are ministers who try to make a case of affusion out of it. There was an old lady,

who had been sprinkled, and after reading this account of Philip baptizing the eunuch, and the other accounts of conversion recorded in Acts, she was much troubled, almost concluding that she must be immersed. She finally decided to go and see her pastor about it. Accordingly she went over to the parsonage and called for Brother Smith. The reverend gentleman was a very smooth talker, and very nice, being particularly noted for his sociability and sprightliness of manner, much more than for his intellectual attainments. The old lady told him her trouble, and said she was afraid she had not been baptized. She called attention to Acts 8:38, in particular, citing the fact that "they both went down into the water."

"Oh," said the pastor, "I can explain that passage to you very satisfactorily, I think."

"Then I will be exceedingly grateful,"said she,"for I have been greatly worried over the matter. It seems to me that immersion only can satisfy the demands of this passage."

"Well, I will endeavor to show you conclusively that it don't make any difference whether we sprinkle, pour or immerse," said the accommodating clergyman. You see they were crossing a sandy desert" (but there is no proof of this assertion).

"Yes, I see," said the old lady, becoming interested.

"And in the eunuch's preparation for this long journey he doubtless placed refreshments in his chariot," continued the pastor.

"Yes, I see," interjected his docile parishioner. (Preachers are often to blame for the stupidity of people.)

"Among other things probably was a jug of water," went on the brilliant teacher. "And after Philip had

led the eunuch to the cross, the latter expressed a desire to receive baptism."

"Yes, I see. Praise the Lord!" exclaimed the devout old lady.

"Thereupon," continued the cunning shepherd, "Philip said, If thou believest thou mayest. The eunuch declared his heartfelt faith in the Son of God and reaching down beneath his seat drew forth the jug, saying, Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

"Oh, now I see it all clearly," fairly shouted the old sister. "And they *both went down into the jug*, didn't they?"

I have now proven from the Scriptures, first, that *Christian baptism is a positive divine commandment.* Second, that it is *for, or in order unto*, 1, entrance into the Kingdom, or the new birth; 2, washing away of sins; 3, the putting on of Christ; 4, salvation, and the answer of a good conscience toward God. Third, that *only penitent believers are fit subjects for baptism*, and, fourth, that immersion only can satisfy the demands of Holy Writ as to the action. I might give other references, but it seems to me that I have offered enough to convince any impartial and honest man. I am satisfied to leave these references with you, and if you will take them and study them carefully, you cannot but be content with the conclusion that immersion satisfies every demand of the language of the Scriptures, while sprinkling and pouring do not.

"But why is it, then, that so many churches practice sprinkling and pouring?" says one. "My father and mother were sprinkled, and my old grandmother was sprinkled. They lived and died good earnest church members. Have they gone to hell?"

That is not for me to say. I don't suppose they have, if they lived up to all the light they had. But

I say that you have greater light, and you will have no such excuse as a lack of light by which to squeeze yourself into heaven. If you reach the Gates of Pearl at all it will be by believing and obeying for yourself. Your father, or wife, can't go to heaven for you. It is an individual matter. And I declare to you, with Bible in hand, that there is no promise that you will ever see God unless you are baptized, and that by immersion.

Now as far as I am concerned, Bible facts, just as they appear in the King James Version, are good enough for me. But perhaps there may be those present who are inclined to be critical, and would like to know what learned men have to say concerning the form of baptism. Well, I can satisfy that class, I guess, for I hold in my hand a copy of what is in some respects the best work ever published on this subject. The simple title of the book is "Immersion." The author, Dr. Jno. T. Christian, has collected the most expert testimony of the scholastic world concerning the primary meaning of the Greek word *baptizo*. It is well known that our New Testament Greek word baptize is *baptizo*. In translating the Scriptures into our language, this word was simply given an English termination, and *transferred untranslated*. This was done to avoid controversy, it seems, but the scheme was unsuccessful. So in order to know just what the word means we must have it translated by competent authorities. A few of these translations I will now quote:—

(1) LIDDELL & SCOTT, in the seventh edition of their great Greek lexicon, define *baptizo* as follows: "To dip in or under water."

(2) CREMER, third edition: "To immerse, to submerge. The peculiar New Testament and Christian use of the word to denote immersion, submersion for a religious purpose—baptize."

(3) THAYER, Professor of New Testament criticism and interpretation in Harvard University: "To dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge. In the New Testament it is used particularly of the rite of sacred ablution, first instituted by John the Baptist, afterwards by Christ's command received by Christians and adjusted to the nature and contents of their religion, viz., an immersion in water."

(4) FRADENSDORF, of the Taylor Institute, defines *baptizein* and *baptein* as follows: "To baptize, to dip."

(5) POPE, of the Berlin Gymnasium: "To dip in, to dip under."

(6) STEPHANUS, in his Thesaurus of the Greek language, defines *baptizo*, "to merge, to immerse, also to dip."

(7) SOPHOCLES, a native Greek, and for 38 years Professor of Greek in Harvard University, in his lexicon of Greek usages in the Roman and Byzantine periods, B.C. 146—A. D. 1100, defines the word as follows: "To dip, to immerse, to sink. There is no evidence that Luke and Paul and the other writers of the New Testament put upon this verb meanings not recognized by the Greeks."

(8) BULLINGER, in his Greek Lexicon and Concordance, says: "*Baptizo*, to make a thing dipped or dyed; to immerse for a religious purpose. By baptism therefore we must understand an immersion, whose design, like that of the Levitical washings, and purification, was united with the washing away of sin."

(9) DR. ANTHON, one of America's best classical scholars: "The primary meaning of the word is to dip, or immerse, and its secondary meanings, if it ever had any, all refer to the same leading idea. *Sprinkling and pouring are entirely out of the question.*"

(10) SCAPULA: "To merge, to immerse; also dye,

as we immerse things for the purpose of coloring or washing them."

(11) GREEN: "To dip, to immerse."

(12) DONNEGAN, "To immerse repeatedly in a liquid, to submerge."

(13) GREENFIELD: "To immerse, to immerge, to submerge, to sink."

(14) GROVES: "To dip, to immerse, to immerge, to plunge."

(15) SCHLEUSNER: "Properly to immerse, to dip, to immerse in water."

(16) ROBINSON: "To dip in, to sink, to immerse."

(17) BAGSTER: "To dip, to immerse, to cleanse or purify by washing; to administer the rite of baptism."

(18) STOKIUS: "Properly speaking it is a dipping or an immersion in water."

(19) WEBSTER, in his unabridged, gives the primary meaning, "To dip."

(20) ENCYCLOPŒDIA BRITANNICA, Vol. III., Page 348: "To dip or wash."

(21) F. BRENNER, in a very learned work, says: "For 1300 years was baptism generally and ordinarily performed by the immersion of a man under water, and only in extraordinary cases was sprinkling or affusion permitted. These latter methods of baptism were called in question and even prohibited."

(22) CARDINAL GIBBONS, the foremost of American Catholics, says: "For several hundred years after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion; but since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by affusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience than baptism by immersion."

(23) BISHOP POTTER, of New York, in a recent

letter, says: "I am quite free to say that the literal meaning of *baptizo*, as ordinarily found in classical writers, is usually to plunge, to dip, immerse, or whatever word you want to strengthen your position."

(24) BISHOP KEANE, President of the Catholic University at Washington, D. C., says: "The best dictionaries show the classical meaning of the Greek word *baptizein* is primarily to plunge, to dip."

(25) BISHOP COXE, Editor of the American edition of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, says: "The word (*baptizo*) means to dip."

(26) JOHN CALVIN, the founder of Presbyterianism, says: "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and it is certain that the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church." (*Inst., Book 4, ch. 15.*)

(27) JOHN WESLEY, the founder of Methodism, says in his Journal, Vol. I., p. 20, under date of Feb. 21, 1736: "Mary Welch, aged 11 days, was baptized according to the custom of the first church, and the rule of the Church of England, *by immersion.* The child was ill then, but recovered from that very hour." And in his comments on Rom. 6:4, he says: "Buried with him—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."

(28) MARTIN LUTHER said: "Those who are baptized should be deeply immersed."

(29) DOLLINGER, says: "Baptism by immersion continued to be the prevailing practice of the church as late as the 14th century."

(30) PROF. MOSES STUART, of Andover, says: The mode of baptism by immersion, the Oriental (Greek) Church has always continued to preserve, even down to the present time. The members of this church are accustomed to call the members of the Western churches *sprinkled Christians*, by way of ridicule and contempt."

Here is a splendid array of evidence, and had I the

time I might easily double it, for all the best authorities of the world are agreed as to the meaning of *baptizo*, the word our Saviour used in the Great Commission. When it comes to a question of scholarship, of fact, they are compelled to agree, no matter what church they represent. I am aware that many good and great men think that immersion is not absolutely necessary; that sprinkling or pouring will do just as well. But I question any man's right to substitute his *think so* for God's plain *say so*. It seems to me sinful *presumption*. And for my part it seems to me that if I were in your place I would not remain contented as a "sprinkled Christian" twenty-four hours. I would obey the Lord Jesus in this matter rather than man.

So I leave the matter with you and your God, but beg of you to come, believe, repent, confess, and be Scripturally baptized. It is the Lord's own way, and hence the only true way. If you honestly follow this way you will gain peace of soul and the full assurance for which your poor heart craves to-night. Come, therefore, and be honest with God, be honest with self. Settle the matter once for all, and settle it right! The Bible teaches that immersion is the only form of Christian baptism. The best scholars of earth admit that it was the Apostolic practice. All churches accept it as genuine. Then why wait? Be immersed at once in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and you will never doubt again!

EXCUSES.

"Then said he unto him: A certain man made a great feast and bade many; and sent his servants at supper time to say to them that were bidden: Come, for all things are now ready. And they all with one accord began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said: I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said: I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said; Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant: Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in; that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. And there went great multitudes with him." Luke 14:16-25.

Mr. Moody, I believe, once remarked that "all excuses are lies." I could hardly endorse the great evangelist in so sweeping a statement. I believe that *some* excuses are honestly made, and with the best intentions; but I believe that the vast majority of excuses are false. They do not correspond with facts.

Many a young man sometimes gives an excuse which he knows is not reasonable. Conscience commands him to do something that appetite, passion, or pride prefer not to do, and he feels that he must make some excuse. He advances an argument which he knows is not consistent, and so the *vast majority*

of excuses are, as Mr. Moody says, *lies*. In some matters, of course, there can be excuses that are reasonable and worthy of notice. But when it comes to this great question of the soul and its relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ, I don't think there is any reasonable excuse in the universe for non-obedience.

In this beautiful parable of the Marriage Feast, we have an account of a very wealthy man making a great feast for his son. I don't know how this man got his money. Possibly by buying articles at a big discount for cash and selling them at 400 per cent profit, claiming all the time that he was selling *at cost*. That is the way some people get rich nowadays. They solemnly declare that they are selling you a piano or a buggy at cost, and to prove their statement bring out a catalogue and show you the *net price*. But they fail to inform you that from said price there is a discount of 50 per cent if paid within 30 days! An old proverb truly says, "There are tricks in all trades." There is a great deal of mental reservation in this modern way of "selling at cost." Many advertisements are merely endless chains of deception. I once heard Professor Radford say that "all kinds of deceiving is lying."

It may be that the nobleman of this parable got rich buying up all the corn in Judea and then holding it until it trebled in value—what is termed in modern parlance, cornering the market. Or it may be he got rich loaning money at extortionate rates of interest. Many do this in the present decade, and when the assessor comes around in the spring, you would think they were the very poorest men in the country, for they having nothing taxable—*their property is always in some other person's name.*

There was an old farmer who had a great deal of trouble keeping his grain bags at home. His neigh-

bors would come for miles to borrow his "sacks," and it became a serious annoyance. He studied and studied how to remedy the matter, and finally, after much cogitation, he discovered a successful plan. He made a large box and marked it "U-S-E." So when his neighbors would come to borrow his sacks for a few days, he would say, "Well now, it is really too bad, but they are all in *use* to-day!" Of course he referred to his pet box, but the would-be borrower was left ignorant of the true status of affairs. The sacks were in use with a *mental reservation.*

That was one way of accomplishing a legitimate purpose, but would it not have been better to have said that he did not like to loan his sacks? I believe it would have paid the old fellow to have been honest, as he undoubtedly lost the friendship and confidence of his neighbors when they found out his trick.

Well, this nobleman of the parable was evidently a rich man, and I presume that he amassed his fortune by practicing some such scheme as those just mentioned. And yet he may have got it honestly, for there are a few rich people in the world who gained their competence honestly. But the probability is that if he was worth a million dollars or more he got it dishonestly. It is said—and I believe truly so—that no man can make a million dollars honestly in his lifetime. The time may come within a hundred years when one can, but it can't be done now.

At any rate this man was rich, and his son was going to be married, and the father determined to spread a splendid supper. He would make a grand affair of the occasion, and excel all similar events in the history of the city. Said he to his wife, "Our neighbor on the left had a big wedding for his son, but we must have something a good deal better than that. And you remember our neighbor on the right

also made quite a display for his son. So we must show them that they do not know even the first principles of a 'swell' wedding." With this I imagine he commenced to enlarge and beautify his place. He engaged a force of painters, and furniture repairers and carpenters, and went to work. In a few days his mansion was overhauled from garret to cellar, inside and outside. His fences and lawns and stables were also given attention. At last everything was ready and he said, "Now we will send out invitations." Calling in his head servant he said, "Go over to Judge Blank's and invite him to my son's wedding." The servant went and said, "My master sends his compliments and wants to see you and your wife at the wedding."

"At the wedding!" exclaimed the Judge. "Who is going to be married?"

"My Master's son—next Wednesday."

"Well, well," grunted the Judge, looking at his notebook, "I am very sorry, but I have another engagement for Wednesday. I have bought some lots over in Joppa, and must go over and look at them. I am very sorry, but tell your Master I will have to be excused."

Now I fear that man was deceiving his neighbor. He evidently did not give the true reason for wishing to be excused. It is probable that there was a little jealousy between his family and that of the nobleman, and he didn't have any great interest in the latter's son's wedding,—but he would *send his regrets* and keep up appearances.

Another servant was sent over to the Hon. Mr. High-flyer's. After the usual bowing and scraping he said, "Come over to the wedding next Wednesday."

"Who is going to be married?"

"My Master's son John."

"Well, I am glad to hear that, for John is a good fellow—whom is he going to marry?"

"Miss Elite."

"That is a splendid match indeed, but I fear it will be impossible for me to be there, as I have an important engagement for that day."

"Well, that is too bad, for my Master will be sorely disappointed. As he will want to know the reason, what shall I tell him?"

"Tell him I have bought five yoke of oxen and I have to go Wednesday to prove them."

Now that was evidently a falsehood, for you would never catch a Jew buying a yoke of oxen without knowing beforehand that they were worth all that he paid for them. Whatever his reason was he withheld it from the servant. But desiring to keep up appearances he formed the best excuse he could think of and thus politely refused the invitation.

Another servant called at the home of Professor Sleek, a young man who had recently entered upon life's sterner duties. He and John had been college friends, and both had wanted to marry the same girl, but the Professor won her. So when the servant delivered the invitation, a haughty spirit took possession of the proud victor.

"What, John going to be married? Well, good for him; I would be delighted to go, but really now, I can't, for I have just got married myself, and therefore I cannot come."

Anybody knows that this excuse is not reasonable, for if there is any event on the face of the green earth that a young married woman, or an old one either, delights in celebrating, it is a wedding. And yet this doughty young Professor laid the blame all on his wife!

Now all these excuses were transparently unreasonable. The whole sum and substance of the matter is that those dignitaries who were invited did not want to go. When the servants returned from their fruitless mission and delivered the particulars to their Master he was much incensed, and said, "Very well, if my bon-ton neighbors cut me like that, go out into the city and invite everybody. Bring in the poor, the lame, the halt and the blind—invite everybody. Tell them to come to the wedding, for my banquet hall must be full."

And the servants said, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room."

And the nobleman said, "Go out quickly and compel them to come in."

We are not told the final result, but I suppose the banquet hall was filled, and they had a royal wedding.

The application is very simple: God invited his chosen people, the Israelites, to the service of his son, but they would not come. John gives a touching account of their refusal in what I think to be one of the saddest verses in the Bible,—"He came unto his own and his own received him not." (John 1:11.) Upon their refusal God said to his servants, "Go out quickly then into all the world and preach the gospel to everybody. Go to the Gentiles as well as to the lost sheep of the House of Israel and compel them to come to the feast." He does not send us out with swords and shot-guns to compel the people to come in. No, no! We are not to compel by physical force, but by the force of a loving sympathy and living truth. This force is equal to every emergency, for it is the power of heaven itself.

God's only begotten Son is to be married, and the great banquet is to be served in the halls of

heaven. It is being prepared now for that great company who have accepted and will yet accept the invitation delivered by His servants. Yes, God's Son is to be married to his Church!

In this connection is beautifully shown the wonderful relationship we hold to the Son of God. Paul speaks of the Church as the Bride, and Jesus as the Bridegroom. What does a bride usually wear? Why, spotless white, of course. And she is supposed to be as pure as the angels of heaven, full of love and trust. All the time of the engagement, whether one year, five years, or ten years, doesn't the bridegroom expect the bride to remain perfectly loyal to him? And in like manner we should be clothed in garments of righteousness and be ready to go in unto Christ to the great wedding feast of eternal love and happiness. The spacious halls of glory are being rapidly filled. Thousands and tens of thousands have already gone on before us and are sitting down at the great banquet tables. The Great King's servants have gone to almost every nation under the sun and are inviting the whole human race to come. Oh, what a gathering that will be when at last the task is done!

As one of God's servants I invite you to-night to *Come.* I invite you to get ready for the great feast. I invite you to accept my Master's precious invitation. I have been pleading with you for weeks now to get ready for this EVENT OF ALL EVENTS. Many have come and have put on the robes of righteousness and are prepared to stand at the Father's right hand. But many others have said, "No, we won't come." Not in words have you said this, but by actions. And my purpose to-night is, if possible, to search out your excuse for this dangerous course, and show you how unwarranted it is.

In my work among the people I have preached to hundreds and thousands, and I find very few if any young people who do not expect sometime to become Christians; and very few old people but what expect, sooner or later, to prepare for the great Judgment Day. My brethren say my work has been very successful, and yet of the thousands who have heard me I presume that less than ten per cent have accepted the gospel invitation. They all intend to accept it some day, but fully ninety per cent refuse to do so for the time being. I presume it is so with other evangelists.

Why do ninety per cent. of the unsaved go away postponing the matter so indefinitely? I will give you a few of the many excuses I have heard and see if I can show you their utter futility. I believe that I can show you that every excuse for staying away from Jesus is contrary to reason and contrary to Scripture.

First, I approach a young man, and say, "Why don't you come to Christ? You are twenty-one years old; your father and mother have been faithful Christians before you, and you have bright prospects for life. Why don't you come to Christ? Your devoted mother stood up here the other morning and asked us to pray for you. You are letting this meeting pass without accepting Jesus. Oh, why don't you come?"

"Well, the truth is I want to sow my wild oats first. After I have all the fun I want in youth I will settle down. But I don't think there is any necessity for me to worry about my soul just at present."

Do you know that almost 95 per cent of the young men of the United States are not Christians? It has been estimated that only 5 per cent of the young men of the country are nominal followers of Jesus. About 75 per cent never darken a church door from one

month's end to another. A vast majority of our young men are sowing their wild oats, and I presume there can be found no more common excuse among this class for not becoming Christians—for not accepting the invitation to the marriage feast of the Lamb. While one of the most common, it is also one of the most dangerous of excuses. Mr. Hughes, in his story of Tom Brown at Oxford, calls it the *devil's maxim.* He says, "Take it all in all, in all the wide range of accepted British maxims, there is none more abominable than this one, as to sowing of wild oats. The only thing to do with wild oats is to put them carefully into the hottest part of the fire and get them burnt to dust, every seed of them." Remember that *whatsoever* you sow *that* shall you also reap, and nothing else. If it is bad seed that you sow, it will be a bad harvest that you will reap. It does not take very much reasoning to prove the truthfulness of this conclusion. Mr. Hughes is right. And a greater than Mr. Hughes has said, "God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7.) I tell you, young man, if you sow idleness, the probability is that you will reap poverty in middle life and old age. If you sow dissipation, you cannot fail to gather its fruits of bitterness in after years. If you sow blasphemy, you will reap opprobrium. The young man who gives way to passion, appetite and lust, will find himself, when old, with poisoned body and wicked mind, and it will take years and years, if he *ever* succeeds, to wipe the stains from his soul.

Oh, don't sow anything that you don't want to reap! Sow seed that will keep you respectable and useful and bring you a rich harvest of felicity. Don't stay away from Christ for the purpose of sowing wild oats! It is the most foolhardy thing you ever con-

templated doing. Sow the good seed of obedience to Christ and reap an abundant crop of peace and joy and love.

All things being equal, the young man in the church has the "inside track" to-day. The pastor was recently telling me about a certain young man in this church who occupied an important position on the pay car of a great railway corporation. He was taken ill after several years of service, and the authorities came to the church for another to fill his place. Shrewd business men want honest, trustworthy employees, and when there is a vacancy at their command they look for some one to fill it who has good moral principles. From a business standpoint alone you can't afford to remain away from Christ. To join the church and live up faithfully to your profession is to reap an abundant harvest of prosperity.

Turning to another I say, "Why don't you come? We have been praying for you, lo, these many days. Why don't you accept the invitation to the marriage feast of the Lamb?"

Listen to a familiar reply. "I think it is my duty, but I don't *feel* like it just yet."

Ah, and is that your excuse? In what passage of the Bible does it say you must *feel* like it before obeying the commands of God? Please place your finger on the chapter and verse! Does the Apostle Paul or Peter say anything about *feeling* just right? Did Philip the evangelist ever say it wouldn't do to become a Christian till you *feel* just so and so?

No, my friends. You can't go to heaven on feeling. Of course you can't go without feeling. The virtue, if you wish to call it such, is all right in its place—I wouldn't take away anything from feeling that belongs to it. But it is a ruinous error to imagine that you can go to heaven by feeling alone,

and if you stay away from Christ it is probable the devil will make it his business to keep you from ever feeling like obeying the truth.

I remember a few years ago, in one of my revivals, a young lady came to our service night after night, but persistently refused the invitation. I talked with her several times, and some of the personal workers conversed with her. But she said, "I don't feel like I think I ought to feel when I accept the Lord." I assured her that she was waiting for a feeling that she would never get, or which if she should get, it would do her no good. I pleaded with her to go ahead and do what was right, to believe and obey the Master, after which she would feel all right. She finally decided affirmatively and soon found rest and peace in the bosom of the Master.

And so I say to you that if you wait till you feel like it, you may wait until your dying day. Many poor souls have waited fifty, sixty, and even seventy years without this feeling you hear so much about, and while they were waiting there was a hell waiting too. Oh, what a mistake it is to wait for some peculiar feeling! Why, if you believe that God's Word is true; if you understand that without Jesus you are lost; and if you realize that He wants you to come, and to come whether you are worthy or not, then COME WHETHER YOU FEEL LIKE IT OR NOT.

We often have to do things we don't like doing. I remember that when I was a farmer-boy I often did not feel a bit like getting up at sunrise, but I had to do it, and I was much healthier and was able to do much more work than if I had lain in bed until eight or nine o'clock. And I wish to impress upon you the fact, my dear young friends, that you will be a good deal healthier spiritually, and will be able to do more good in your journey through this vale of tears,

if in the morning of your life you consecrate your all to Him. God has not promised you good feeling before obedience to Jesus. Not until you have shown your faith by your works should you expect that good feeling which is so prominent a part in the experience of every blood-bought soul. Do not try to get the cart before the horse in this matter, but arise promptly and obey the commandments of God's Book. Then you will receive that joy from On High which surpasses anything this world can offer.

To a third I put the question, "Why don't you become a Christian? Christ invites you with all the world to the marriage feast. Why don't you accept his invitation?"

"Because there are so many backsliders," comes the hackneyed reply. "I would become a Christian, but I am afraid I could not hold out."

If you honestly feel like that there is all the more urgency that you should come at once. Your excuse is a poor one, but your heart is pliable and we want young men just like you in the Church to-day. That there are inconsistent Christians I admit. It has been so all along. Christ had twelve apostles and one of them was a scoundrel, a thief, a murderer. And in the ancient church of Corinth there was great wickedness. At Ephesus there was once a church of five thousand members, but nearly all turned away; yet some died and went to glory. "Many are called, but few are chosen." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

It is very unmanly for you to stay away from Christ because you are afraid of backsliding. Your excuse is practically a confession that you have the knowledge and ability to become a Christian. If you fail to use that ability you will be held responsible at

the Judgment, for our ability is the measure of our responsibility. So don't stay away. If you are willing to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and to cling to His strong arm all along life's pathway, there is no danger of backsliding.

Church members are often to blame for the prevalence of this excuse. Some one in the congregation says, "There is old Tom Smith, for instance; he recently united with us, but I don't believe he will ever hold out, for he is a pretty hard old case." Did you ever see a father take his little babe from the crib and, standing it on the floor, remark, "I don't believe this child will ever walk; just see how it falls down! No, it will certainly never walk, for it's six months old and can't travel yet. No use trying, wife; just get back in your crib and stay there, little youngster, for you'll never succeed in getting about alone."

Did you ever hear a father talk that way? No, of course not. But he gets down on the floor and holds out his hands to the little one, and as it tries to come to him and totters and falls, he lifts it up and comes a little nearer.

"Now come to papa. Ah, that's a brave little man!"

He knows that the child will learn to walk if it is properly encouraged. Why can't elders and deacons have just as much confidence in the babes in Christ which take up their abode in our churches? Why can't we encourage them, and if they fall, not give them a kick, saying, "Just as I expected, I never thought you would amount to anything anyhow!" but help them up again with kind words and gentle counsel?

You will not be a backslider if you do your duty, my friend. If you will accept Christ's guidance, He will lead you on safely. You can hold out if you try.

There is no need of backsliding, for the Lord has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Courage, then! Stand by your leader, the Great Captain of our Salvation. Trust Him, and He will lead you to victory!

A fourth time I put the question, "Why don't you become a Christian?" And I hear the cruel reply, "Because there are so many hypocrites in the Church."

"How do you know there are hypocrites in the Church?"

"Because I know a Christian when I see one."

Thus many admit that they know what it is to be a true Christian, but they neglect becoming such themselves. Jesus says, "He that knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes."

Hypocrites in the church! Possibly there are, but there will be no hypocrites in heaven! They will all be in the other place, and that is where you will be if you put off becoming a Christian, and all your life long trample under foot God's precepts. You ought to enter the service of Jehovah to-day. You ought to come and receive the blessing He has in store for you.

I don't like this habit some people have of harping about hypocrites. It is very small business, and the smaller and harder the heart the more successfully it is carried on. If we knew all the circumstances surrounding the lives we criticise it might be very different. Perhaps you would not find so much fault if you knew all the besetting sins and heart-rending trials attending the life of this man, or that man of God. I honestly believe there are many good people regarded as hypocrites who will be in heaven a million years before their persecutors. God alone knows the ob-

stacles your brother has to overcome, and I think it is not very becoming of you to cry out, "Hypocrite, hypocrite!" He is probably doing the very best he can, and that is certainly very much better than you are doing. It is unadulterated meanness for a man who knows his duty and is not doing it to criticise church members. If there is any class I delight in severely lashing it is these self-satisfied, self-righteous men who go up and down the earth snarling, "Hypocrite, hypocrite!" at some poor, stumbling church member. I don't hate them, for I don't even hate my enemies; but I do *hate their ways* with a righteous indignation. How puerile it is for any man who knows what is right and yet don't do it to be all the time criticising and finding fault with others who are doing the best they can! Why, you ought to step out and set us an example of truth and sobriety. I think the devil must laugh in his sleeve when he gets his grip on one of these self-righteous men.

Speaking of fault-finding when the circumstances are unknown, I am reminded of a little story I once heard Prof. Dungan relate: A gentleman and his little daughter were speeding along through Iowa over the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. The little girl was crying. The father tried every way he could think of to pacify her. But neither beautiful picture books nor delicious sweet-meats sufficed to accomplish his purpose. The child cried and cried until the passengers became very nervous and began to make remarks. Some said that if the child were theirs they would give it a severe chastising, while others expressed a wish that the father and his squalling daughter would get off the train. After awhile they pulled up to a prominent station and the train stopped for a few minutes. Having witnessed the discomfiture of his fellow travelers, the gentleman

arose in his seat and said, "Friends, I know my little girl annoys you with her crying, which I have endeavored in vain to quiet. But I beg of you not to find fault. A week ago to-day we passed along this road and the little girl's mother was with us, and she was happy. There were no tears on her bright little face then, but songs and laughter. But to-day the dear wife and mother is in a casket in the baggage car—dead—and the poor child is crying for her mamma." The passengers with one accord slunk down in their seats, and not one of them found any more fault after they learned the circumstances.

Always find out the circumstances surrounding a case before you criticise. Here is a poor weak brother who makes many crooked paths perhaps. But don't be too hard upon him, for if you could realize what terrible temptations he has to war against you would be grateful to God on his behalf that he has the courage and strength to do as well as he does. If you know what is right and fail to do it, you will receive the greater condemnation.

In the fifth place let me ask this young man, twenty-five years old, "Why don't you accept this invitation to the marriage feast of the Lamb?"

"Well," comes the reply, "I am not settled in life yet. As soon as I get more permanently situated, I intend to connect myself with the Church."

Settled in life! Is *that* what you are waiting for? If it is, you will probably wait forever, for I would like to know who in all this broad land *is* settled in life. Sometimes we think we are settled, but we are not. To-morrow we tear up and move. Once again in the new home we say, "Now we are settled. Here we will rear and educate the children." But possibly one of the children dies; or the health of the mother is not good, and a change of climate is necessary, and

once more we have to move. And so it goes all through this earth-life. We are never settled here. Paul truly remarks that "here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come,"—"a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The only place we will every be truly settled is at God's right hand. We are all living in the future,—living in the work we are going to do, in the pleasures we are going to enjoy, and in the homes we are expecting to build. There is no reason why you should wait to be settled before becoming a Christian. This is a miserably poor excuse. Ah! the best way to get settled is to give your heart to Jesus, for no matter who you are nor what are the circumstances surrounding your life you will find in Him peace of soul and joy of heart. So don't wait, but come promptly and commit your all to Jesus! In his service there is fullness of joy, and sweetness of rest which the world cannot give.

"And why don't you come to Christ?" I say to a sixth young man.

"I don't know which church to join, sir. They all claim to be right, and yet all are different. I have been thinking about this matter till I am sorely perplexed. What shall I do?"

This is really perplexing to many, and if there is a reasonable excuse in the whole lot this is the one. I tell you, brethren, I cannot but sympathize with a young man who makes this excuse from the heart.

Here is a little town of three or four thousand inhabitants, for instance, and it has ten churches. A stranger stopping at the hotel says to the landlord on Sunday morning, "What church shall I attend today? I want to go where they have a first-class minister and fine music."

"You can't miss it, sir; go where you will in our town and you will find both requirements met," re-

plies the landlord, who is not very particular himself, and who wants to be popular with everybody.

The stranger saunters forth. He hears a bell ringing and it seems to say, "Come to church, come to church, come to church!" "All right," he mentally replies, "I guess I will go over there." He goes, and finds a beautiful church indeed, with cushioned pews, frescoed ceiling and painted windows with names and mottoes. The preacher comes out in a long white robe, which looks very much like a night-gown (but it isn't!) The choir follows in elegant order and artistically mouths a beautiful anthem. After a long introductory program the clergyman proceeds with a neat little *preachment*. During the sermon the members of the choir write notes to each other and chew gum. If the preacher happens to make a mistake in pronunciation or grammar they laugh, for they do not belong to the church, and as they are paid just to sing, why should they be particularly decorous after their part of the worship (?) is over?

From the minister's sermon the stranger takes a few excerpts. Among other things he says, "Beloved, it does not make any difference what church you belong to, just so you are honest." And again, "If you wish to enjoy a pleasant little parlor dance, or a quiet game of cards at the home of a friend, you may do so without religious scruples." The whole sermon being along this line, evidently designed to catch the membership of a select crowd of the religiously inclined, our stranger leaves without finding himself much nearer the Kingdom.

The next Sunday he hears another bell ringing. "Come to church! come to church! come to church!" it seems to say, the peals following each other in rapid succession. "That sounds like business," says the seeker after light; "I believe I'll go over there to-day."

So with hat and cane he saunters forth again. If there is anything a young man likes it is business, go-ahead-ativeness, push, and bounding energy. I wish our churches everywhere had more and more of these elements entering into their make-up. It will never do for a church to sleep. It will never do for a preacher to give the people vague, not to say vain, philosophies as a regular diet. The days of paganism are well-nigh past. If we want to reach the young men we must *give them something tangible and practical.*

Stranger enters the church. It is a little late, but he is courteously shown a good seat. He sees a great crowd of people, and they are all singing some of the old Gospel Hymns. Presently the preacher takes his place at the stand. After a few "Praise the Lords!" and "Hallelujahs!" he announces as his text the words of the apostle, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." But instead of quoting from God's Word to prove that belief alone is the only requirement unto pardon, he reads from a little black volume, Article IX., Page 20, the theory of his church, "That we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." (M. E. Discipline.) This sounds very well, but Stranger, having been a faithful Sunday School scholar throughout his childhood years, recalls that the Apostle James says, "Faith without works is dead, being alone."

I sometimes wonder how these good people get up so much steam. The Methodist church is one of the hardest working religious bodies in the world, and yet they minimize the value of work in the soul's salvation. But this is no more inconsistent than their assertion in Article II. of their creed, that Jesus *'died to reconcile the Father to us*, when Paul puts it

just the other way. Then again Methodists have been the champions of the mourner's bench system of "getting religion," and of the six months' probation fallacy. So notwithstanding their earnestness, Stranger, being a thinking man, says, "I can hardly afford to take membership here, for they would compel me to come in on six months' *suspicion*, and before my time was up I might backslide and so lose the glorious privilege of becoming a full-fledged Christian."

He retires to his room and puts in what leisure time he can command searching the Scriptures. The next Sunday he hears another bell ringing. It rings out very clearly and pleasantly the invitation the polite church it represents seems to offer. It seems to say, "Come to church, come to church, come to church —to church!" He says to himself, "That is elegant, I will drop in and see what they teach." Upon entering he realizes that he is in a beautiful building. In all its appointments there is an air of aristocracy. There is a wide vestibule. The floor slants forward, opera house style, and back of the pulpit is a great pipe organ. The preacher has spent four years at college, and three years at the seminary. He is a thoroughly polished pastor,—polished in dress, language, and manners. His theme is "Predestination." Taking the Presbyterian Confession of Faith as his text, he argues very nicely therefrom that God ordains that certain persons are to be saved, while certain others are to be lost. Waxing eloquent he says (his arms always rising and falling at the proper angle), "It may be that this little babe was born to be lost. No one can tell. Whom the Lord wants to curse he will curse, and whom He wants to bless He will bless. His decrees are ever arbitrary."

"Well," soliloquizes Stranger, as he returns to his hotel, "what assurance can I have of redemption if

their theory is correct. Perhaps I'm one of the 'non-elect' and after I have swallowed all their theology I will find myself lost at last. No, no, Mr. Parson, I can't join your church. Your notions concerning election, foreordination and the decrees chill my soul."

And thus Stranger goes on for weeks without satisfaction. Every church presents a different set of doctrines, some of them diametrically opposed to each other, and yet each and every one claims to be right! He naturally concludes that if the Bible is the true basis from which to judge, these hundreds of churches with their conflicting dogmas must be wrong.

"Well," says somebody, "why don't you join the church *nearest* right?"

And now let me tell you why, my friend. Because it would be inconsistent to join any church that teaches one thing as an essential doctrine not taught in the Bible. If you want to join a church, why not join the Church of Christ? Don't be content with joining something *nearest* right; but join that which *is right*. If you will take the pains to investigate in the light of the New Testament Scriptures, you can easily find the Church our Lord set up. If you really desire to become a member of God's household, don't join any of human origin. Don't join any church with a human name, or a human creed. Take the Bible as your only guide in this matter, and you can make no mistake.

Some one says, "I am going to move away out in another State where there is no church of my choice. Should I not cast in my lot with one of the sects until I can do better?"

To all such my reply has been, Don't do it. Even if you live five hundred miles from any Christian Church, don't unite with a church with a human name,

and thus become a partner in the perpetuation of divisions, which Paul condemns. (1 Cor. 1:10). I would live 500 years outside of any local church connection, except as a visitor and nominal helper, before I would take membership with any sect. I believe there are Christians in all the churches, but I would to God that they could be induced to leave off their human names, and take their human creeds and burn them, and thus remove one of the greatest of all hindrances to the world's conversion. There should be only ONE CHURCH, and that the Church of Christ, which is also called the Church of God, and in Revelation the Church of the First Born. I don't care which of these names you call it, for they are all used in the New Testament. I plead with you to *join the church that is right*, not the one that is "nearest" right. I don't like to hear our people say, "I think we are 'nearest' right." Why should we be timid or compromising? We ought to know that if the Bible is right, we are right, for the *Bible is our only rule of faith and practice.* If the Bible is wrong, then we are wrong. But that remains to be proven. The teaching of the Bible is clear and plain. Take it as the man of your counsel, dear Stranger, and do what it tells you to do in God's own appointed way. Don't make the weak and vain excuse any longer that you "don't know what church to join." Join the Church of Christ,—the church pictured so beautifully in the pages of the New Testament,— the church which was opened on Pentecost—the church which was dedicated by the life-blood of our own dear Lord!

I say to a seventh young man, "Why don't you accept the invitation God gives you to the marriage feast of the Lamb?"

"I am waiting for a call."

Waiting for a call? Waiting for a call? Waiting

for God to come and knock you down, figuratively speaking, and compel you by sheer force to become a Christian? Do you think the Creator is going to stop the movement of the planets to convert you? Oh, no. Don't wait for some mysterious, miraculous, special call. You are not important enough for that. When David could say, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him?" I feel sure that Jehovah will not stop all the machinery of the universe and suspend every law of heaven and earth just to convert you. And yet some people act as if they expected something of that nature must occur before they could really come to Christ.

Waiting for a call! Why God has called you eighteen hundred years ago. He has been calling you all through the ages. The history of Christianity is a loud call. The divinity of Jesus Christ is a loud call. The writhing of your conscience as you think of your many sins is a loud call. "Come," says the Son of Man, "for all things are now ready." The marriage feast is being spread. Millions upon millions of redeemed children of men are being gathered in and yet there is room for a mighty host yet to come.

Your excuse is that you are waiting for a call. Well, listen: Christ says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." And in the last chapter of the Bible we learn that "the spirit and the bride say, *come*. And let him that heareth say come. And let him that is athirst, *come*. And *whosoever will*, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17.)

You have been called many times. This may be your last chance. God will not always wait. Says the Psalmist, "He will not always chide, neither will

he keep his anger forever." So don't wait any longer, dear unsaved friend, but answer heaven's many calls to you *now!*

To an eighth person, a lady, I say, "Why don't you become a Christian? The King of Glory invites you. Why not?"

"Well," she replies, "I am waiting for my husband."

Let me remind you, my sister, that the Word of God teaches us to go ahead and do our duty no matter what others do. We cannot go to heaven for each other. We must go individually if we go at all —every one for himself. The best way to win your husband is to come and do your duty. You can do ten times as much towards winning him to Christ from within the fold as you can from without.

Another says, "I am waiting for one of my friends." I believe thousands of souls are lost in that way. It is a snare of the devil. I beg of you to avoid it. If you will come and do your duty you will have much greater influence with your friends. There is a great power in a life of prayer. But what influence have you now? Your friends may well say, "Physician, heal thyself." Oh, let no husband wait for his wife; let no wife wait for her husband; let no friend wait for his friend, but let each accept the gladsome message of love without delay. Make no longer the vain excuse, "waiting."

In the ninth place I say to a father or mother, "Why don't you let your little son and daughter come to Christ?"

"Oh, because we think they are too young."

I suppose that excuse is made thousands of times to evangelists. Only last winter, in one of my meetings in a college town, a young lady, fifteen years old, made the good confession, and her many friends were so happy, for she was a noble and talented girl. But

her father objected to her baptism, saying that she was "too young." Two years before, an older sister had desired to become a Christian and the father had said, "Too young." Now that daughter is a young lady, and she is an infidel.

Oh, parents, if your children are eight, nine, ten or twelve years old, and want to come to Christ, I plead with you not to put a straw in their way. A child is not too young to obey the blessed gospel if its conscience says, "I ought to be a Christian!" If its little heart yearns to accept Christ, we should never be found standing in the way.

"But," says one, "I am afraid it will not understand."

Pray tell me, who in this world does fully understand what it means to accept the Lord? There has never yet been a soul converted to Christ who understood all about it. Take those old Christians who have been reading the Bible forty, fifty, and some sixty years—poring over the precious precepts and promises of God again and again—ask them if they fully understand. Paul, you remember, says, "Great is the mystery of Godliness." But if a little boy or girl understands that he or she needs a Saviour; and without Christ they cannot go to heaven; that is enough, let them come.

Sometimes when only a few children are converted during a series of special meetings, the effort is considered almost a failure. But this is a great error. The vast majority of those who come to Christ come in the morning of life. B. Fay Mills, the well-known evangelist, estimates that only one-per cent of all our church people come to Christ after forty. Those who come young make the best Christians. Isaac Errett, one of the greatest men in the current religious reformation, joined the church when he was nine years

old. Robert Moffatt, at the age of twelve, was the only convert during a revival in an old Scotland church. The dominie was sorely disappointed. In announcing the final results of the effort, he said, "Only one little lad." But what did that little lad become? Why, as everybody knows, the greatest missionary ever sent into Africa. It was Garfield, I believe, who said that when he met an urchin on the street he felt like lifting his hat, for there might be wonderful possibilities buttoned up under that ragged jacket. Let us do all we can to win the boys and girls to Christ, for the children of to-day must be the pillars of church and state to-morrow.

I remember while preaching at Manhattan, Kansas, that a very little girl came forward one night in response to the Gospel Invitation. She was just a mite of a child, ten years old. I had not been in the ministry long and did not want to make a mistake. Being afraid that the little thing was too young and ill-informed as to the significance of the step she was taking, I announced that the elders of the Church would visit her before we proceeded to induct her into the Kingdom. They would question her, and if her answers were satisfactory, then we would baptize her. This may seem strange to our young people of to-day, but the older people will recall very forcibly the old prejudice common among our people against receiving little folks into church fellowship. Well, the next day one of the most conservative elders and myself went to the house of the little girl to talk with her. We found her surrounded very unfavorably. The father was a common laborer and a rough, wicked man. The mother was a self-acknowledged backslider. But we found the little girl to be an exceptionally bright child. She was very much in earnest about becoming a Christian, and her little heart seemed

running over with love for the blessed Master who had said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not." Her answers to the questions propounded were so satisfactory that we decided to receive her without delay. So that same evening at the close of preaching services I baptized her. I shall never forget how Brother House, a faithful deacon, picked her up in his strong hands and gently lowered her to me as I stood waiting in the baptistry. She was dressed in spotless white, and I thought I had never seen any one look so pure, so angelic. Well, Dolly, that was her name, came along to church as regularly as she could, till by and by her father moved with his family to a neighboring town, and I saw no more of my little convert. One day, a few months later, a good sister startled me by saying, "Brother Hall, did you know Dolly Hull was dead?"

"What," said I, "Dolly Hull dead?"

"Yes, she passed away last week—typhoid fever."

I want to tell you that I devoutly thanked God from the bottom of my poor heart that I had not put a straw between that child and Christ. And we should never do so. If you keep them from coming now while their hearts are young and pliable, they may never come. So let us adopt the beautiful sentiment expressed in one of Professor Excell's hymns:—

"Open the door for the children, tenderly gather them in,
In from the highways and hedges, in from the places of sin;
Some are so young and so helpless, some are so hungry and cold,
Open the door for the children, gather them into the fold."

Oh, do not say again that your child is too young. If he is ten or twelve years old, and has had average training, he ought not to be kept out of the Church forty-eight hours. Is he too young to die? No. Then do not harbor longer the vain excuse that he is too young to live for Christ.

To a tenth person I say, "Why don't you come to Christ? Why will not you accept the invitation to the marriage feast of the Lamb?"

And here comes the pitiable excuse, "I will *sometime*. I want to be a Christian, and I certainly will before I die."

But oh! how dare you postpone your coming? Life is so uncertain and death so sure! God has never made any promise to those who intend coming "sometime." It is always *now!* "Now is the accepted time"—"to-day is the day of salvation." "Come, for all things are now ready." "The King's business requires haste." These are familiar expressions to the student of God's Word. The promises are all for those who accept TO-DAY. In no place is there any promise for those who wait till *to-morrow*.

Did you ever think it is presumptuous in you to say, "Sometime I will become a Christian?" Sometime may mean forever. Time is not your own, but God's. And time once gone is gone forever! It can never be returned. Oh, you had better accept Christ *now*, TO-NIGHT, for it may be the last opportunity of your life. God help you!

"Lost! Yesterday,
Somewhere between sunrise and sunset,
Two golden hours!
No reward offered,
For they are gone forever!"

If you let the present opportunity to come to Christ go by, it will be of no use to offer a reward for its return some sad day when you grow old in sin, for God himself could not consistently bring it back. He may give you another opportunity, and He may not, but it is certain that this one will never return. When you say *Sometime*, do you realize what it means? Why, it is equivalent to saying, "I will not accept

the invitation; I will not go into the banquet hall; I am not ready to put on the wedding garment; I want to wear the old filthy rags of self-righteousness a little while yet; I want to revel in the fields of wickedness, and bow at the shrine of appetite; then, after awhile, I will endeavor to clean up and go to the wedding feast of the Lamb." Pitiable excuse indeed! Why make it longer? Why not come to-night and throw off the old rags of disobedience, be washed in the blood of the Lamb, and put on the wedding garment of holiness to the Lord? Then you will find grace to help in every time of need.

No excuse for neglecting Jesus will be accepted. I have given you only ten out out of hundreds that are offered by those who know their duty but fail to do it. I might go on until the last excuse was given, but in the light of God's Word could not find one that is consistent. God's invitation is reasonable. His urgent request to be present at the marriage of his Holy Son is consistent in every way. He asks you to do nothing that will not elevate you in all that is good and beautiful and true. So I plead with you to come to-night! Accept Christ now. The Church is ready; the angels are ready; the Spirit is ready, and Jesus says, "Come, for all things are now ready!" Will you come?

HEAVEN.

"There is a world above,
Where parting is unknown;
A whole eternity of love
Formed for the good alone.
And faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that happier sphere.
Montgomery. (Friends.)

"There is a land where beauty cannot fade,
Nor sorrow dim the eye;
Where true love shall not droop nor be dismayed,
And none shall ever die."
Mary Howitt. (Song of Margaret.)

I am glad to say to-night that nearly all the people in this world believe every word I have just quoted from these distinguished authors. I will not say that *everybody* believes in heaven, but that fully ninety-nine persons out of every hundred believe in a better life beyond. It is a subject in which everybody is interested—old and young, black and white, red and yellow—all classes and all conditions are interested in the discussion of the questions we have for consideration to-night:

"Heaven—Where is it? What is it? Who may go there? and, Shall we know each other there?"

Now I am frank enough to say that this subject is largely speculative in many of its phases. There is not a shadow of doubt in the mind of any person present, I presume, but that there is a heaven, for the Bible teaches it emphatically. But there are some things concerning the matter we will never fully

understand this side of the dividing line between life and immortality. The human mind is only finite. We are not strong enough yet to grasp all of this subject. But even if our minds and hearts were strong enough to endure all the wonderful warmth and light emanating from this matchless theme, God thought it best to wait awhile, and not to reveal all. He has revealed enough to us, however, thanks to His Holy name, to give us most earnest longings for that better world—tremulous yearnings for that glorious place beyond.

Now let us look at God's Word and see what He has revealed on this subject. There is a Heaven. God's Book teaches us so from beginning to end. He has also taught us through natural instinct that there is a better place beyond; deep down in our souls he has implanted longings that cannot be expressed for a better, nobler, happier life; longings for a place of exquisite and unending delight. This world is full of sin and sorrow. It is often overwhelmed with grief. It is a world of sickness, death and dying, disappointment and pain. It is a world of misunderstandings and remorse, a world that no one cares to live in forever. We are all looking forward. *No* one really lives in the present. *We* live in the future. In one sense we are not inhabitants living here, but we are living where we are going to live—living in the house we are going to live in next year, in the trip we are going to take, and in the work we are going to do. We are talking about these things all the time. They are our meat and drink and sleep. Truly, we live in the future.

Well, this is comforting if not always profitable. The world could not long stand without *hope*. And it is good that those who love the Lord should be ever looking beyond where there will be no sin, sickness

and sorrow. The Indian longs for happier Hunting Grounds. The heathen woman longs for the time when she will be a man. Some long for one thing; some for another; but all with one accord, saint and sinner, Christian and heathen, are looking towards the future, believing that it has in store richer blessings than the present.

It is taught in our books. It is taught in our nurseries. Our sages, priests and ecclesiastical potentates everywhere teach it. Who would dare deny it? Why, even the skeptic believes in a future. A certain old farmer in the country where I was brought up used to say that he "didn't care what they did with him when he died; they might take his body and throw it in the hog pen." It was his way of expressing his contrariness to prevailing sentiment. But I am glad to say that this old, gray-haired man finally got into a habit he had never had before; he got to attending church regularly and giving attention to the things of the Kingdom.

The nearer we come to the grave the more we think of heaven. Sometimes standing over the grave where a loved one lies there seems to be but a thin veil between us and the future. Standing over the corpse of his brother, the scoffer, Mr. Ingersoll, was moved to say: "Hope sees a star and faith hears the rustle of an angel's wing." Ah, in such moments we all see a star and all hear the rustle of heavenly wings. There is not a mother here who has buried a child but expects to meet her darling again. There is not a husband here who has buried his life's companion but is looking to see her Over Yonder. There is not a strong man or woman here who does not expect in some better day and place to see that gray haired father and mother, whom you laid beneath the sod some five, some ten, some twenty years ago.

Oh, yes, I expect to see mother again; I make no other calculations. God is on the affirmative side of this question, and He has made every impulse of the soul throb with the assurance of a happy meeting, and all human instinct is on the side of there being a better place beyond.

If this is so, where is that place? Now do you think I am going to tell you exactly where it is located, whether on Neptune, Venus, or Mars, or on one of the four rings of Saturn? If you think I am going to tell you just where it is—that is at just what point in the universe—you are mistaken, for I am not here to answer so definitely. The facts of the case are that God has not revealed to me or any other living man the exact location of heaven, and I don't dare speak positively here, for I don't know.

Some one says, "Well, I believe this earth will be the future dwellingplace of the righteous." Do you? Then I have no objections. Personally I don't believe it. But if at last I shall find myself mistaken, and that the Creator has made it the chosen place, why, all right, I won't make any fuss about it. If the Lord says, "I have decided to purify and remodel this old world, and let you and your loved ones live here forever," I will reply, "Very well, Lord, just as you say about it; it suits me very well." But if the Lord shall say, "Look here: I have fitted up a better place away yonder in the skies; you go up there and dwell," I will reply, "All right, Lord, I will not quarrel about where you put me. I know it will be a good place, Lord; so wherever you put me I will be satisfied."

The Bible says that Heaven will be "up," and that is all we can know about it here. Heaven is never spoken of in the Bible as *down*, but always as "*up*". Hence when heaven is spoken of the gesture is

always up. Did you ever hear of anybody's gesturing downward when speaking of heaven, or upwards when speaking of hell? No. Instinctively we all point up when speaking of heaven. Ask any little child where heaven is, and note how quickly and naturally it turns its eyes toward the deep blue sky.

But let us glance at a few Scriptures. Open first at the Book of Job, 3:4. (Some scholars believe it was written before Genesis.) "Let not God regard it from above; neither let the light shine upon it."

Turn again to the Book of Deuteronomy, 30:12. "Who shall go up for us to heaven?" And again in the fourth chapter, the sacred writer declares that "the Lord, he is God in heaven *above*."

Go on through the Psalms and Proverbs, and the books of the prophets, and you will find that the words "up" and "above" are uniformly used when reference is made to the location of Heaven.

Go over to the New Testament and it is always the same. Take, for instance, the first chapter of Acts, 9th verse: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken *up*; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Notice that he was not taken *down*, nor *out*, but *up*. Read also the tenth and eleventh verses: "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went *up*, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing *up into heaven*? This same Jesus, which is taken *up from you into heaven*, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The Apostles were not told to look *down* into heaven, nor *behind* into heaven, but *up*.

And again in 2 Cor. 12:4, Paul speaks of being "caught *up* into Paradise." So all through the Bible, wherever the location of God's Throne is spoken of,

wherever heaven, or the final home of the faithful is spoken of, it is always up, never down. But at no place does it tell us how far up, nor give us the boundary lines.

How in accord is all this with human nature! It is natural for man to look up to something higher and better. When a man is down in the gutter and determines to do better, we speak of him as "coming up." The man who has been unfortunate, and sick and poor, but after awhile health returns, and he begins to have a good bank account, we speak of him as "getting up again." All the world is looking up expectantly to a purer, happier and safer life. When speaking of this mortal life we often say, "Down here in this world of wickedness and sin." But when speaking of immortality we use such expressions as "going up to the throne of God," "up to the home of the Eternal," "up to the portals of Glory," etc. Animals look down for all they want, but the soul of man looks up.

I could give you many more Scriptural references, but I think those already presented sufficient. I sometimes like to discuss some phases of this subject from other standpoints anyway.

Some one inquires, "Brother Hall, do you believe the soul sleeps after death until the Day of Judgment?" Our Adventist brethren think that it will. They travel all over the country preaching and arguing to this effect. But I don't believe a single word of it. I can prove anything in the world from the Bible, by wresting words from their natural meaning; but I don't believe that, by a legitimate use of the Scriptures, anything can be proven in favor of soul-sleeping. However, it is a question of little importance. If the Lord wants my soul to sleep in the grave until the Resurrection Morn, all right;

the time will seem short, for with God a thousand years is as one day. My belief is that after we die the soul will go directly into the company of Jesus and the redeemed. Whether that will be in paradise or heaven proper, I don't know and don't care. All such questions are very speculative in their nature, it seems to me, and we should not be dogmatic upon them. Good men differ in their conclusions regarding the matter, and it makes no difference, for they are really and truly non-essentials for the present. There are no commands bearing upon these questions, and it is the commands that are important. Unless they are obeyed it will make no difference where heaven is, for we couldn't enter anyhow.

Brother F. G. Allen, of Kentucky, a brilliant and godly man, theorized that paradise meant heaven and that the soul goes directly there. There are some good scholars who believe this, and I simply give you their idea. But probably the vast majority think that paradise is an intermediate state where the soul will wait after death until the Judgment and then pass on to heaven proper.

But let me give you Henry Ward Beecher's idea. Whether he was correct or not I cannot tell; it is simply a theory. No man can prove it, but it impresses me as being the finest theory I ever heard. The great Brooklyn preacher believed that when the souls of the righteous pass out of this world they are taken to an intermediate place. And then when the Last Great Day comes, the day of final jubilee, all that have lived, from Adam down to the last man, shall be gathered together from land and sea, and shall be caught up to meet God before the Judgment throne.

Then those who have lived right, not only in this little world, but in all the worlds in the Universe of God, shall be assigned some great central place of eternal abode!

Heaven be this poor little earth? This little planet, infinitesimally insignificant when compared with the wonderful worlds by which we are surrounded? No. I don't accept that notion. We know that no mortal eye hath seen the grandeur, and no ear hath heard of the splendor of that wonderful Home. So it seems ridiculous to me to believe that this little world will be selected as the place where all the children of God will be gathered together from the four quarters of the universe to glorify Him forever. I do not believe that God has wasted all these mighty worlds we see floating in space around us, but I believe we have brothers and sisters, millions, billions, yea, decillions of them, perhaps, residing on other planets. These, with all the redeemed from this world, shall dwell together forever in that glorious land of eternal bliss, wherever it is. That is my idea of heaven; take it for what it is worth.

WHAT KIND OF A PLACE IS HEAVEN?

People thought last week when we were opening up this old amusement hall, and fixing it up for a Tabernacle, that it was a pretty hard sort of a place —a ridiculous place to attempt a religious work. At first I suppose some passed by in disdain. But after awhile they got courage to look in, and seeing a choir, and a preacher, and a pulpit and a Bible, and hearing gospel songs, and seeing hundreds of good people here, they decided that it wasn't such a bad place after all, and so here we are to-night doing a great work, with God's blessing. The people have found out that the Tabernacle is a good place after all.

Well, what kind of a place is Heaven? Is it a good place, a bad place, or an indifferent sort of a

place? That is what we want to know. And I am glad that Revelation is very clear on this point. We cannot say definitely where heaven is, but we can say positively that it is a good place. Everywhere we are taught to believe that it is a place of rest, a place of peace, a place of exquisite joy! There will be no sorrow there, nor pain of any kind, but only life and light and love forever and forever! That's the kind of a place it is.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO THERE?

I can't tell you. When a child I got the idea from that old song our ancestors used to sing that when we reached heaven we would stand around in long robes—something like night-gowns—with palms in our hands, and sing and fan forever and ever!

"I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A palm within my hand."

But I never sing that song, for I don't want to be an angel; I want to be something better—a "king and priest unto God." That is what the apostle says we may become, and so we should not want to be angels at all.

I don't like these old ideas of Heaven. It is all wrong to imagine that we are to sit there with folded hands forever and ever, doing nothing except perhaps to take an occasional walk about the golden streets. I tell you I work hard here, but I expect to work infinitely harder hereafter. But, say! I get tired here, but I won't get tired up there; that's the difference. My work here is to preach and to pray; but I will do neither up there. No, there will not be a single sermon or prayer in heaven; it will

all be praise up there! We will probably continue none of our present occupations in heaven; but the Lord will have something else for us to do. Oh, yes! We will doubtless continue singing. Professor Powell says it is the only art practiced in this life, however, which we will use in the life to come. But there will be one great difference in our music here and there. In heaven there will be no discords, naught but perfect harmony. I believe we will continue to sing. Waller somewhere says:

"For all we know
Of what the blessed do above,
Is, that they sing and that they love."

The Lord is not a lazy master, and I do not believe he is going to keep us up there for millions and millions of years with nothing to do. I believe Heaven will be a place of tremendous activity; that every single inhabitant will have something to do, and something too, that will praise and magnify the name of the Infinite One. There will be no "out-of-works" up there. Heaven will be a place of unending employment, and yet, paradoxical as this may seem, a place of perpetual rest. Mr. Gladstone thinks that a change of occupation insures the sweetest rest. But be this as it may, be assured, dear friend, that Heaven will be a place of the largest bliss, and that it will be everlasting.

There won't be any saloon keepers or any gamblers there; no oppressors of the poor; no thieves; no liars; no blasphemers; no destroyers of virtue. There will be no "prohibition won't-prohibit men" up there. No, no. The Lord won't have any work for them in Heaven, nor for any of the class from whom one joint has been left out of the backbone. Heaven will be made up of men who have been redeemed from all these things; men who have spent life in His service.

Heaven will be made up of workers, for God never uses lazy people. He uses the "weak and foolish things of this world to confound the wise and mighty," but He does not use the *lazy*. He chooses to manifest His strength through weakness often, but never through laziness. Don't get the idea that you will go to heaven if you do nothing here.

But I hear some one saying, "Mr. Hall, we don't comprehend your talk. You just assured us that in Heaven we will have perfect rest, and yet you tell us there will be so much work to do. How is it?"

What is rest? Some Christians don't pray once a month, they don't go to prayer meeting three times a year, they don't attend the revival meetings, and, in short, they don't do enough of anything to make them tired; and yet they talk about REST. Why, poor soul, you can't REST unless you are TIRED. I wish some of you would work hard enough once to get real good and tired in the Lord's work. It would be a great thing for the Church and for yourselves too. The man who plows all day, until every bone in his body aches, can sit down in a stiff chair, or recline upon a hard couch and enjoy sweet rest. The man who works at the same occupation eight or ten or twelve hours a day is tired and needs a change of occupation. When I am real tired from preaching it rests me to get out of the pulpit and go home and have a romp with the children. A change from mental to physical occupation is rest to a man engaged with his books, and a change from physical to mental occupation is rest to the man engaged in manual labor. In Heaven there will be rest enough, for there will no doubt be wondrous variety. We will praise God in hallelujah songs, and we will work on forever without knowing what it is to be tired. Well may we say with Cowper:

"O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true—
Scenes of accomplished bliss; which who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refreshed with foretaste of that joy?"

WHO WILL GO TO HEAVEN?

This is certainly a point in which we are all intensely interested, and I dare not answer it in my own words alone. So we will turn to the 21st Chapter of Revelation. In the sixth and seventh verses we find this language:—

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things and I will be his God and he shall be my son." Overcometh what? The evil thoughts and depraved appetites and evil passions of the body; that is what.

He that overcometh the sins of the flesh, the wickedness of the world, and the temptations of the evil one, shall inherit all things. But how about those who don't overcome? Read the eighth verse:—"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shal have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

Right here comes the usual inquiry, "Do you believe in that lake of fire and brimstone?" No, I don't believe it will be a *literal* lake of fire and brimstone. You know the Book of Revelation is highly figurative from beginning to end. Its twenty-two chapters are a glorious series of some of the grandest figures in all literature. Hence I think the language referred to is figurative. But say; a figure is simply an attempt to describe the real, and

if hell is figuratively a "lake of fire and brimstone," the reality must be even worse! But as to the actual location and state of hell, I trust it may never be our lot to know. It is sufficient for us to know that all who do not overcome their evil ways go to that place of "outer darkness." But to him that overcometh is promised the everlasting life in Heaven.

I believe we begin our heaven or our hell here; and there is really such a thing as a foretaste of heaven here, and there is probably also such a thing as a foretaste of hell here. It is related that there were once two boat loads of people going from Cleveland over to Buffalo, the first filled with religious people going over to a convention, the second filled with gamblers, jockeys, etc., going over to some kind of a tournament. A man came running down, jumped into one of the boats, took out his handkerchief and wiped his brow, and exclaimed, "Well, well, I was just within one of getting left." He took out his latest religious paper and commenced to read. By and by he noticed he was pretty well out from the city, and he folded his paper and began to look around to see if he could recognize any of his brethren. But to his amazement he saw several groups of men playing cards, and just then he heard two or three great big oaths. A moment more he saw them passing a bottle around. Hurrying to the captain he said:

"In the name of reason, Captain, what kind of a crowd is this?"

"Oh," said the captain, "they are a lot of sportsmen going over to Buffalo to the races."

"Why, is not this the boat chartered by the Christian people of Cleveland to carry delegates to the convention?" said the excited clergyman.

"No," said the captain, "you are on the wrong boat."

"Ah, I guess so."

Now that man did not play cards, he did not gamble, he did not drink, and the journey with the fellows who did was simply a hell to him. There was no sympathy there, nothing in common between him and those wicked men, and he was literally and sadly out of place in such a crowd.

The same morning another man came running down, and jumped into the other boat just as it was about to leave the wharf. He sat down, puffing, blowing and swearing, took out his handkerchief and mopped off his red face, took out his daily paper and glanced over the news. By this time he had regained composure, and noticed that the ship was almost out of sight of the city. Drawing a flask from his pocket he took a drink, and then looked around to see if he could see any of his chums. To his surprise his first glance revealed a lady reading the Bible. He looked a little further and saw a group of gentlemen, and overheard them calling the names of John, Mark, Luke and Paul. He had heard these names in childhood, and soon made up his mind they were arguing Scripture. It seemed very strange to him. So he went to the captain and said:

"Captain, for heaven's sake, what kind of a crowd have you got on board?"

"Oh, very good people, I reckon," said the captain.

"Who on earth are they?"

"Oh, a lot of church people going over to Buffalo to some sort of religious convention, I believe."

"Oh," groaned the gambler, "then I am on the wrong boat."

That trip was very unpleasant to him. Why? Because he was out of his element. He had nothing in common with those Christian ladies and gentlemen at all, and they had nothing in common with him. It

was agony to him to be with them, and he was greatly relieved when they pulled into Buffalo.

Yes, we begin our heaven here, and we begin our hell here. Every man and woman in the Tabernacle to-night is on his or her way to heaven or hell; and the way to know sure to which place you are bound is to take the Divine measuring rule and measure. God's Book will tell you. It may be that you have been riding in the wrong boat. The one is bound to the Brighter World, the other to Outer Darkness. If you will take the pains to measure your character by God's Book you will know just where and how you stand to-night. In a very practical sense, Heaven is what we make it, and hell is what we make it. And I don't think these eternal abodes are very far off either; but when once we reach our final destination there is no retracing our steps. So we should be sure that we do the right thing now.

SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER THERE?

Almost every mother is deeply interested in this question, because she has a loved child, or some dear one "over there." And there are few young men who are not interested in the matter, for they have a mother, or a father, or a brother or sister, or some old college friend in that "better land." Indeed, who could be so callous as not to be interested in the discussion of this point? We all ask the questions over and over and over again—Will we know each other there? and Will we look like we do here?

Friends, God has not said much about it, but I think that from the little He has revealed on this subject I can say positively, without any shadow of doubt,

"YES, WE SHALL KNOW EACH OTHER IN HEAVEN!"

I will give you but one text, Philippians 3:20, 21:—"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Do we look for Christ? Of course we do. The angels said, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner." He has not come yet, but be assured he is coming, for God never breaks a promise. Oh, I fear He will come all too soon for many of us. If it were officially telegraphed to-night that He would be here at twelve o'clock to-morrow, do you think there would be a single person off their knees in all this great city? Do you think there would be a single dollar change hands in the gaming hells? Do you think anybody would open a store?

"Oh, no, of course not; but then He won't come so soon," says one.

Perhaps He may not come to-morrow at noon, but we know that He is coming, and it is your business and mine to live in constant expectation and be always ready. Ah, in the twinkling of an eye He will come with his shining cohorts and carry all the nations to judgment. Are you ready?

"Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." (Change our *body of humiliation*, is the thought, for nothing that God has made is vile—change our body of sin, of pain, of death), "that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." This same body is to be resurrected, if dead, when He comes; and if not dead it will be caught up and transformed, and all will be changed like unto his

own glorious body. You remember that Jesus, after his resurrection, was changed. He could pass through a closed door, and do many wonderful things impossible to the natural body. His was a spiritual body, and yet it looked like it did before his resurrection; for when Thomas would not believe, He told him to place his fingers in the prints of the nails, and to thrust his hand into the rent of the spear. And, in the instance of the two disciples on the way to the village of Emmaus, He walked and talked with them, but they did not recognize Him until, while sitting at meat, they were led by His prayer to look at Him critically; then they knew Him, because He looked so much like He did before. I think that when the body is transformed there will be a purer, sweeter look, but we will not appear any taller, or shorter, or materially different any way, but we will be clothed with immortality, and the new body will not be subject to pain nor sorrow, and there will be no cloud upon the brow. Instead of the remorse and gloom that sometimes cloud our faces here, there will be a look of perpetual joy, the unfading bloom that cometh from the presence of the Lord.

Yes, I believe that every mother will know her child in Heaven. Indeed, I think we will know each other better. We don't know each other very well here; there is nothing so peculiar as the human heart, and we don't get very well acquainted in this life. Perhaps the vast majority of our troubles arise from misunderstandings, because we don't know each other. Up there we will know our loved ones, and dwell with them forever, for there will be no cruel separations in heaven. And if we wish to be in some other part of God's Glorious Abode, the wish will have immediate fulfillment, for Up There space and time will have no entrance.

No more death or dying, no more folding of tired hands, no more worn, pale faces, no more pain! Oh, will it not be glorious! We will mount up as upon the wings of the eagle; we shall run and not be weary. In the last chapter of Revelation, John says: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruits every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face."

That is one of the most precious promises in the Bible, I think—"they shall see his face." I have been preaching Christ for years, but I have never seen His face. Oh, how I long to look upon his blessed features! We have all heard about God from childhood, but we have never seen His face. But in heaven this promise will be fulfilled.

"And His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever. And he said unto me, these sayings are faithful and true; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass." Ah, yes, *these sayings are faithful and true*, and it will be a glorious place indeed, beyond all power of speech to describe. John tried to describe it, but he was limited to the use of human words. No human tongue or pen can adequately describe Heaven. In a severely practical sense, it must be seen to be appreciated. The great

question is, Are we so living as to have assurance of ever seeing that Blest Abode?

I never grow tired of that little poem of Mrs. Hemans:

> "Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy,
> Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy;
> Dreams cannot picture a world so fair,
> Sorrow and death cannot enter there;
> Time doth not breathe on its fadeless bloom.
> Far beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb—
> It is there, it is there, my child."

We speak of heaven sometimes as the Great Beyond. If we mean beyond the Jordan of Death, the expression is all right; but if we mean beyond the universe, I doubt its consistency. Let me quote you a passage right here from one of my friend Updike's sermons, a passage prepared for him by a gifted astronomer of Ohio. Perhaps it may serve in enlarging your vision on this subject as it did my own:—

"If you were permitted to stand on one of the golden rings of Saturn, you would see another firmament of suns, moons and stars stretching overhead, and all around. Then could you go on to the nearest fixed star, Alpha Centura, with its two suns, shining with light equal to forty-six times the intensity of our sun, and stand on one of the beautiful planets there, you would behold the firmament of the Polar Star system, whose light is forty-six years reaching our earth. From thence you would see Vega, which shines with a light equal to four hundred and forty of our suns. Could you then pass on up the silent aisles of the heavenly temple of the shining monarchs of Vega, you would see the glittering firmament of Capella, blazing with several suns. From the golden brow of Capella, you would behold the firmament of Arcturus shining with a light equal to five hun-

dred and fifty of such suns as shine in the blue vault which surrounds us. Could you stand upon one of the planets in the bewildering firmament of Arcturus, you would not then be beyond the reach of the telescope, or the calculations of bold astronomers. Above you would discover glorious Alcyon sending forth a flood of light, equal to twelve thousand of our little suns. But this is only the beginning—the mere vestibule of the starry temple. There are celestial systems lying beyond, some of which, we have every reason to believe, contain upwards of twenty-two thousand suns each—and think! each system is a firmament with a family of revolving planets a million times larger than our own. It is affirmed by those who have spent a lifetime in the exploration of the starry heavens, that there are no less than eighteen million suns shining in the firmament, within reach of Lord Ross' mighty telescope! Well may we ask, where are the frontiers of the boundless heavens—the last remote spot, beyond which no star glitters on the dark bosom of eternal night—where is the verge of the universe? where are the highest heavens, the home of the redeemed? Who dares to say that he could count the grand total of heaven's millions of firmaments, one above another, even though he could count a million years at the rate of five hundred per minute? Could you fly in a straight line with the velocity of light from the edge of Alcyon, the sixth firmament beyond ours, it would take you billions of years to reach the highest heaven. Nay, if you were to travel through all eternity, you would never reach the outer bounds of Jehovah's vast and beautiful temple, beyond which no suns may be found exploring their way through the infinite heavens, burning into the dark concaves of night.

Now if the home of the redeemed is beyond the stars, as many imagine, it will never be reached, FOR THERE IS NO BEYOND. If Adam and Eve had started from the garden of Eden for heaven, six thousand years ago, they could not have reached it yet."

May it not be that heaven, the "Beyond" of which we speak, is in the center of all this vast expanse, in some glorious sun that knows no night? John speaks of measuring the capital city, 12,000 furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it were equal. But that is figurative language again. The fact is that there is nothing in geometry, nothing in trigonometry, nothing whatever in higher mathematics capable of giving us an adequate idea of the immensity of heaven. Certainly it is something worth working for, something worthy the good confession, worthy the faith, repentance, and baptism demanded. It is worth a life of earnest toil and earnest devotion; worth all the heart can give; worth our noblest ambitions, and our noblest efforts.

Yes, praise God, there is a haven of eternal rest awaiting us, a place of joy and bliss for all who live right; a place of perpetual activity, where we will know no wrong, no sorrow, no remorse. And we shall know each other there! Do you want to go there? Then come, and accept Christ, for there is no other way. You cannot work your way there through your own deeds of what you may call righteousness. Jesus says, "No man cometh to the Father but by me." So I ask you to confess His name to-night, and to take upon yourself the sacred vows of the Christian life. Will you not do it? It is something you will have to do some day, but if you put it off until compelled by Omnipotent force to do it, the act will not avail unto salvation. So confess Him now, and enter into His service. Then

when the last trump sounds, and you are summoned to Judgment, you will be privileged to hear the sweet words of Jesus, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34.) Abraham will be there, and Isaac and Jacob; David, Paul, John, and all the worthies of the ages. I would to God that every person here who is not a Christian might start heavenward to-night. Come and lay your sins at the feet of Jesus, and there will be sunshine in your soul to-morrow!

THE GREAT COMMISSION.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28:19, 20.

There are two great commissions in the history of our country. The commission that made Washington commander-in-chief of the Colonial Army was a great commission. When the British armies were advancing, and the cause of American freedom was at stake, it was necessary that some bold and trustworthy leader be found, and all eyes were centered on George Washington, the young General from Virginia. It was truly a great commission the patriots gave him and caused him in the end to be spoken of as the Father of his Country. He led the thirteen colonies on to a great victory and in one sense became the founder of the greatest nation of all history.

Then the commission that sent Benjamin Franklin to the Court of France was a great commission. By his marvelous shrewdness and keen statesmanship he was enabled to form an alliance with that great power which proved of untold value to the Colonies during the Revolution. If it had not been for the kindness of France, in sending General La Fayette and others to our assistance, we might not have been able at that time, if ever, to free ourselves from the yoke of foreign rule.

There have been great commissions all through his-

tory. The commissions to which I have referred had to do with the affairs of nations. But there have been great theological commissions, and great literary commissions, and great social commissions, and commissions of every nature, some involving much, and some little. But there has been but one commission from the beginning of time to the present that can be truly called *The* Great Commission; Washington's was *a* great commission; Benjamin Franklin's was *a* great commission; and the commission of King James, which resulted in the gift to the world of what we commonly call the "King James Version," was *a* great commission. But the commission I want to talk about to-day is worthy of being designated as *The* Great Commission, for it is greater than all others combined both in its conception and in its results.

We find several different records of this commission, but the one I prefer as a text is recorded in the last part of the twenty-eighth Chapter of Matthew, and it is well called, "*Jesus' Marching Orders to His Church.*" It is couched in very simple language, and it is free from all flashy seals, such as we usually have attached to modern commissions. It takes only half a minute to read it, and the humblest peasant can understand it without legal assistance.

Then why call it The Great Commission? Because from its promulgation have come the greatest blessings to the human race, both temporal and eternal. It has already revolutionized the world, although the work is but fairly begun.

The exact time and place of the giving of this commission is not known. Some think it may have been given several days before His ascension, and from another mountain in Galilee. But it seems to me more probable that it was given just before, and that

consequently the words are among the last He ever spoke before the angels came down to take Him to glory. It was a very serious occasion, a time to be remembered forever by those who were present and who heard the wonderful words that fell from His lips. As He walked out with them, Jesus, no doubt, spoke many words not recorded. It will be a pleasant thing when we reach heaven to talk with Peter and James and John, and have them tell us everything the Master said as He went out to the mount with them on this last trip before His ascension. Comparatively little of all that our Master said and did is recorded. You remember that John says, "If they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (Jno. 21:25.) And again, "These are written that ye might believe." (John 20:31.) I would like to have further particulars concerning a great many things connected with the life of our Lord, and I'm sure we can profitably spend a few hundred years in heaven in thinking about these things and looking over their history as we shall be able to do more satisfactorily there.

So the Saviour conversed with his chosen followers on the way from Jerusalem to the mount. Upon reaching their destination I imagine the Apostles formed a little semicircle about Him, Peter at the head and John at the foot. At this juncture I surmise there was a short pause, while the Master calmly and lovingly surveyed the little company. After looking into the face of each with such tenderness and confidence as only the Son of God could possess, He made a declaration which I would to God every man, woman and child might hear, understand and weigh. Listen! "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." And then follows the Great Commission:

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Now let us look at these words critically, for more potent language was never uttered since the world began. It is from this commission that every true Christian worker under the sun derives his authority, and we should make no mistake in its interpretation and application. The whole text naturally divides itself into six heads (and we ought always to allow the Bible to divide itself naturally). First we have the introduction, and then the four points of argument, and lastly the conclusion, or peroration. It is in one sense the world's greatest address in sixty words!

In the introduction, the Great Speaker makes the simple yet all-comprehensive statement that He is Lord of all. Never before had He used such significant language. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Before this the Master had raised the dead, and caused the blind to see; He had held His hand out over the raging sea and said, "Peace, be still," and the winds and waves had obeyed him; He had delivered the Sermon on the Mount, the greatest sermon the ears of men have ever heard or ever will hear. But never before had He said, "*All* authority is mine." Hence this declaration is to be taken as of very great consequence.

All Power. What does it mean? It certainly does *not* mean that all power belongs to the Pope of Rome, the great antichrist of prophecy. It certainly does mean that this silken-robed dignitary who sits in poor old deluded Rome, clothed with an ill-gotten authority, and claiming that he has all power; that he

can forgive sins, or withhold forgiveness; and that he can make the emperors of the world tremble when his edicts go forth, is a gigantic fraud! That's what it means in plain, everyday English. And it means that those who serve him as the representative of Christ are serving a gilt-edged impostor. The Pope claims to be the "viceroy of Christ," and therefore infallible and all-powerful. But Christ says, "All power is given unto *me*, both *in heaven and in earth*." And in the Book of Revelation He is called the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." It is an awful thing for any sinful man, or any number of fallible human creatures to presume to such dignity as do some. Let Catholics and Protestants alike be careful lest in their presumptions God cut them off as cumberers, and give His work into humbler and truer hands.

But why had Jesus never said this before? Because He could not say it consistently until He had gone down into the grave and had wrestled with death, and had conquered this, the world's greatest enemy. He came forth from the unseen having done what no one else had ever done,—He had conquered Death. After His resurrection He could truly say, "All power is given unto me." The hope of Christianity lies in the truth of the Resurrection. It is the great central point around which all the facts of the Gospel revolve. The three greatest words of the Bible are these—"*He is Risen.*" Well does Paul say in First Corinthians 15:14, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." And again, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." Over four thousand years had rolled by since the creation of man. Millions upon millions had come and gone, but not one had

ever, of his own volition, returned from the dead. So when Jesus in His own strength met this arch-enemy of humanity's happiness, and, after three days of conflict came forth gloriously victorious, He demonstrated His divinity beyond the shadow of a doubt, and established forever His right to be heard as the chief potentate of heaven and earth.

And now this great Ruler gives us the promise of peace, pardon, and life eternal, if we keep His requirements. He is all-powerful, and to have his favor is better than all the world beside. But Christ's curse is the worst thing that can fall upon the soul; for that means banishment from Heaven, a calamity far worse than a thousand physical deaths. So let us be careful to recognize His authority in all the walks of life. If we speak, let us speak as Jesus commanded. If we pray, let us pray in His name. And whatever we do, let us do it according to His holy will. Herein lies a great lesson which the world has so far been slow to learn. We have always paid too much attention to the sayings of men. Hence a multitude of conflicting creeds and dogmas. But we should carefully inquire, *What does He say?* Then listen attentively, and obey implicitly. If churches and Christian people generally would adopt this rule, we could remove a great deal that keeps the world divided and in sin, and accomplish more for Christ in one year than in a century of this *unfaithfulness* to the *all-authority* of our Lord.

We come, secondly, to what homileticians would designate as the argument. There are naturally four points, or heads, in this division of the mighty theme. Let us look at them in order. After His unusal declaration of all-power-ship, the apostles listened earnestly, I imagine, for they knew that words of tremendous import were coming. It is not probable

that they comprehended the real seriousness of the occasion, nor the far-reaching importance of the commission they were receiving. And yet I feel sure that they were never before so deeply impressed with both the theme and words of their Master. It was a solemn, but sweet occasion.

After saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth," the Saviour gave His commission in these memorable words:—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Now what is the first of the four great points that we find couched in this language? Listen! It is a simple one but all-important: "*Go!*" Ah, yes! a little word, but world-wide in its beneficent sweep. The apostles had first *come*, and now Jesus commands them to *go*. Herein lies the secret of successful Christian propagandism. We have hardly taken the first step as yet in carrying out this great command. We have *Come*, and *Stopped short*. But Christ says *Go*, a little word of two letters, yet in this word is wrapped the whole sum and substance of Christ's gospel. Go! It should be the watchword of every true disciple. It should be emblazoned on the banners of the Church. It should be the controlling spirit, the moving motive, of every man, woman and child that hopes for salvation.

"Go," says the Master. Have we gone? Eighteen hundred years have elapsed since the command was given and yet to-day nearly if not quite two-thirds of the inhabitants of this poor old world have never so much as heard that there is a Saviour! Eighteen long centuries have dragged their weary lengths down the dusty vista of time, and yet more

than 800,000,000 are sitting in darkness! Oh, brother, is this the best return we can make to Jesus for all His love to us! I tell you I believe that *the measure of our responsibility is our ability*, and it will be so considered in the last day. And I fear that among those who have professed the name of Jesus, more than half will be lost, unless they arouse themselves more fully to the great work of carrying the Glad Tidings to others. Our own salvation depends largely on the efforts we put forth in behalf of those about us, not only on this side of the sea but on the other as well.

Our people have been wonderfully successful in their work of teaching the simple elements of the gospel, and in enlisting souls in the armies of the Cross. But I am ashamed to say that we are away behind our religious rivals in our observance of this great point of the commission—"Go." Very few men living to-day would dare to meet our Clark Braden, or our John Sweeny, in public debate on the great issues of the Bible. We can whip the world in arguments, for we are right doctrinally, and well able to defend our position against all assaults. But I am glad to say that many who are wrong to-day doctrinally are right on the first point of the Great Commission. It is humiliating, but we must admit that the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Episcopalians, and the Baptists are each and all excelling us in the blessed service of going into all the world and teaching the nations. We are rolling in wealth as a people. In the Christian Church we have men who have an income of hundreds, possibly thousands of dollars every day. In Kansas City alone, it is said, our people have ten million dollars represented. And yet our Foreign Missionary Society has never been able to raise a

hundred thousand dollars in one year. Why, the poor little despised Salvation Army raised that much in one week. Ah, it is a shame that a church with a million members, and six thousand preachers; a church whose members have an annual personal income of over $100,000,000.00; and a church whose plea strikes the thinking world as that of no other religious body,—I repeat that it is a burning shame that we should have only 140 missionaries in foreign fields. We must bestir ourselves. When all our mothers shall be willing to consecrate at least one child to preach the gospel to the heathen; when our fathers shall be as ready to say, "God bless you, my child," to the boy or girl who wishes to go to foreign lands to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ as to the one who remains at home and makes a useful citizen successfully engaged in some honorable worldly occupation, then and not till then will we rise to our duty and privileges as a chosen people of God.

Oh, that our church might catch more of the missionary spirit of the apostle Paul! He was a prince among missionaries and the greatest preacher of Christ the world has ever seen. Suppose we should tithe our income as a people, and also tithe our membership. What a mighty work would result! There are 650 members in this church, I believe, and it is one of our typical congregations. If one out of ten of you would consent to go, that would mean sixty-five missionaries, or half as many from one church as our whole list of 9,000 congregations now furnish!

Who has not heard of the sacrifices of Sarah Hosmer, the Lowell seamstress whose soul was filled with the missionary spirit? She was so anxious to support a missionary that she toiled many months with her needle until she could save up $50.00, the

amount necessary to equip a native Nestorian for Gospel work. And this first work was so successful and so joyful that she kept on sewing until she had educated five missionaries, who went out preaching Christ in their native land. "When she was more than 60 years old," says Strong, "she longed to furnish Nestoria with one more preacher; and, living in an attic, she took in sewing until she had accomplished her purpose. *In the hands of this consecrated woman*, money transformed the factory girl into a missionary of the Cross, and then multiplied her six fold." She has gone now and the place that once knew her shall know her no more. She earned little, yet there are six missionaries and perhaps thousands of souls to her credit in heaven. When such a spirit shall take possession of us, it will be but a question of time when we shall be able to evangelize the whole world.

Well do I remember one of my first missionary sermons in the state of Iowa. I was only a student preacher, but had prepared my sermon with great care, and went out to my country appointment on this occasion with great expectations, for I was to preach and take up a collection for missions.

I nearly always went home with Brother So-and-So for dinner. He was a fine old man, and worth $75,000 or $100,000. He had cattle on many hills, and much earthly substance of every kind. And he was an old-time member of the church, a great "stickler for first principles." Well, I preached my sermon, and thought it was pretty well done. After I sat down the officers of the church took up a collection and received something like $1.50, and of this sum I distinctly remember putting in fifty cents myself. On the way home I thought I would find out if I could how my host liked the sermon. (I had

noticed that he was asleep during the larger part of its delivery.)

"Well," he replied to my inquiries, "I think we ought to convert the heathen at home first, and then give our attention to missions."

There are many people who feel like that brother, and they are doubtless just as honest. He felt that he was living consistently. If I remember correctly the little church paid me $10.00 a trip, of which amount this rich brother, besides giving me my dinner, paid 25 cents. And when he attended the town church near by they told me he usually dropped a dime in the basket. So putting it all together this good man probably gave not less than three or four dollars a year to convert the heathen at home!

Oh, stingy soul of mine, when wilt thou *look up?* Why wilt thou always look down like the hog? We are ever looking down at our worldly duties, our accounts, our possessions, and our secular affairs, instead of looking up towards the light that comes from heaven. God help the church to get more of the Go spirit!

For twenty-five years the Great Apostle to the Gentiles compassed land and sea to make proselytes. Like his Master, he was *missionary to the core.* There are a few people left on the shores of time who claim to be anti-missionary Christians. But, dear friends, there really cannot be any such thing as an *anti-missionary Christian.* This is a contradiction of terms. The whole genius of Christianity is missionary. Why, if Peter and James and John, and Philip and Paul and the rest, had staid in Jerusalem till "all the heathen at home had been converted," there would not be a Christian in the United States to-day. Indeed there would be no United States, for it was the Gospel that made this nation possible.

We only begin to show forth the love of Jesus when we become missionaries at heart. I pray that this may be a missionary church. May God put it in the soul of some noble young woman here to-day, and some noble young man, to consecrate their lives to the great work of carrying out the first point of the commission, and within the next twelve months may they be making active preparations to go to some foreign field as a missionary.

Over in Kansas at a meeting of perhaps only three or four hundred workers from the various Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. organizations of the state, a call was made for those to stand up who were willing to go as missionaries, and 122 responded! Just think of it. Out of that little meeting of only a few hundred 122 were willing to consecrate themselves to foreign work. And among the number were some of the brightest young people I ever saw, graduates from some of the best colleges in the world. Are we ready to-day to lay our all at our Saviour's feet—our hopes, our earthly pleasures, our means, our talents, and everything? Can we honestly say to-day, "Lord take me and use me as Thou Wilt?" God help us! May we never again read carelessly over this wonderful little word, *Go*. Perhaps it may become the text-word of our soul's loyalty to God.

Passing from the first great point of the commission, we come to the second: "TEACH ALL NATIONS." And I imagine that Peter looked up inquiringly as if to say, "What shall we teach them, Lord?"

Did he say "Go, teach them the 39 Articles of Episcopalianism?" No.

Did He say, "Go and preach to them the tenets of Roman Catholicism?" No, for this was several hundred years before there was any such a church.

Did He say, "Go and preach to them Luther-

anism or the Augsburg Confession?" No, for it was nearly 1,500 years before Luther was born.

Did He say, "Go and teach them the 25 articles of Methodism?" No, for it was 1,700 years before John Wesley was born.

Did He say, "Go, teach them the five points of Calvinism?" No, for John Calvin was not born until 1509.

Then what shall we teach? *Campbellism?* No, for there is no such thing under the sun. Alexander Campbell was a great and good man, and a grateful people are proud of his memory. Professor Fowler, the father of Phrenology, said there was only one other such brain in America, and that was Daniel Webster's. When Campbell left the university of Glasgow, his old professor remarked that in all the long years of his connection with the institution no other such young man had left their halls. "If he lives," said the instructor, "he will shake all Europe." He lived, and the influence of his masterly thoughts are not only shaking Europe but the whole civilized world to-day, and yet he did not organize a new church. He simply *restored the old.*

"Go teach all nations," said the Master. *Teach* ME. This is the legitimate inference as to the meaning of the words, for we find his apostles and disciples wherever they went preached Christ. We find Paul preaching Christ to the Philippian Jailer. We find Philip preaching Jesus to the Ethiopian. And indeed the burden of the whole New Testament ministry was Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God. And Jesus-preaching is to-day the crying need of the world. In His conversation with Nicodemus He said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Would to God that every church and every clergyman the world over might lift up Jesus, and Jesus

only. Oh, that every human creed, and every man-made confession of faith, could be burned, or sunk in the depths of the sea! If all this grating machinery of ecclesiasticism could be swept out of existence to-night, and the Church could be left without any creed but Christ, to-morrow the principal stumbling block in the way of Christian Union would have been removed, and four hundred millions of professed followers of Jesus would find themselves practically one in the great work of extending the Kingdom. Then in less than ten years the uttermost parts of the earth would have heard the message of salvation. But to-day theologians are teaching too much of theory and too little of the Lamb of God. Hence the cause of true religion often languishes.

But how are we to teach Jesus? By telling the old, old story of the Cross. We must so present the Gospel as to make sinners cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" And then we must teach them the doctrine of Christ. And when we preach doctrinal sermons we should not be afraid to come out boldly, though lovingly, and tell the whole truth. We can't have true *Gospel Meetings* without *doctrinal sermons.* Christianity without doctrine! No. A gospel without doctrine would be like a body without bones—it could not stand. It is impossible to save a soul without doctrine. The Word of God, which is full of doctrine, is the light of the world, and without its great truths it is impossible to redeem the lost, whether in home or foreign fields. It is the business of the Church to go to the unredeemed everywhere and teach the love and law of the living God. Not only to those of England and America, but to those of India, China, and the isles of the sea. Mr. Nott labored fourteen years in Tahiti without a convert. Finally he succeeded in

translating the Gospel of John into the native tongue, and soon after won the first soul with that wonderful verse beginning, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." This is said to have been the first fruit in Polynesia, where there are to-day 750,000 Christians. Dr. John E. Clough's labors were similarly blessed in Burmah, where 10,000 were baptized in twelve months. It is our work to go and plant the Gospel beside all waters, knowing full well that God will take care of the seed and in due course of time bring it to a glorious maturity.

We now come to the third point of the Great Commission, and I imagine I hear some one say, "Brother Hall, it is getting late, and we fear the roast will be spoiled if you don't close and let us return home." No, that isn't the truth with you, my friends. You fear that I am about to say something about baptism, and you are saying to yourself that you have heard that subject harped on so much that you would rather not hear it mentioned again. Well, I don't care to "harp" on it, but I must preach the truth as it is in God's Word. I would rather that my right hand should be cut off than to willfully misrepresent my Master's doctrine. Let the Lord cleave my tongue and forbid that I should ever attempt to speak another word when I say that *essentials* are "*non-essentials*." I will have to give an account of my sermonizing, not to man, but to the Divine Father. It does not matter whether those who hear me are pleased or not, but it matters greatly whether my words and work are acceptable unto God. So do not wax uneasy if I spend a few minutes in this connection on baptism. So many other evangelists neglect their duty in this respect that the burden rests all the more heavily on

those of us who are willing to preach a whole Gospel.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, *baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" These are the words of our Saviour. And have you ever noticed that the larger part of the Commission is taken up with words bearing on Christian Baptism? This is not saying that it is the most important thing at all; but it stands out so plainly that it is strange that men should ever have spoken of it as a *non-essential.* Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in the name of Jesus, Luke says; and Peter declares that the only name under heaven whereby men can be saved is the name of Christ. And according to Matthew the only way to get into that name is to be baptized into it. Peter and his fellow apostles seemed to understand it so and on the Day of Pentecost 3,000 were baptized upon a penitent profession of their faith.

Hence we must preach baptism. It is a part of the Great Commission. The duty is clear. The obligation is important. Among the last words Christ uttered on earth were, "Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." We usually attach great significance to the last words of a dear friend. Jesus is the best friend the world ever had, and those who love Him ought to be quick to observe His farewell directions.

In this connection it may be well for me to remark that by baptism the Saviour did not mean sprinkling or pouring, but immersion. Those who love the truth are growing weary of false teaching on this subject. The scholars have settled the question long ago as to the meaning of the word Jesus used in commanding this sacred ordinance.

The inconsistency of trying to make *baptizo* mean anything but to *immerse* is utterly inexcusable. Jesus commanded immersion, but never sprinkling or pouring.

"But," says one, "some of my relatives lived and died without being immersed, and they were good, earnest, conscientious church members. Will they be lost?"

That is not for me to say, for I am not the judge of the quick and the dead. If your grandmother lived up to all the light she had, and had opportunity of having, she is probably in heaven to-day. But you are not living up to the light God has given you. I do not assert that all who die un-immersed are lost. But I do say that there is no promise of salvation to any living soul without Christian Baptism, which cannot be Scripturally performed without immersion. If God chooses to set aside His Word in some individual case and save without immersion, why, that's His business, and not ours. But I dare not preach anything unauthorized, and sprinkling and pouring are unauthorized. Immersion was the uniform practice of the church for 1300 years, and then the "great anti-Christ" legalized sprinkling and pouring at the Council of Ravenna.

It is too bad that those favoring these unscriptural practices persist in ignoring historical facts, and attempt to substantiate their position by forced interpretations of the Word. There is a great deal of talk about union nowadays, and I rejoice because of it. But I believe with Dr. McArthur that if the various churches ever do unite it must be at the baptistry. There are several millions who can never be induced to ignore one of the clearest commands of Scripture. Better division than a surface union on a shoddy foundation.

"But why does the Christian Church make the subject so prominent?" says another.

I will tell you the reason. It is that we are the only great Protestant Church which teaches and practices baptism just as taught in God's Word. The others largely ignore it. The average evangelist is practically compelled to remain silent on the subject in order to have a Union Meeting. The Baptists are right on the action, but wrong on the design. Somebody must declare the truth, therefore, and why should we fail to do it? Give me one convert made right rather than a thousand made wrong.

In Mr. Mills' meeting at Cincinnati, 150 of his so-called converts expressed a preference for the Roman Catholic Church. What profit is there in stirring up the people to shed hot tears over their sins, and then leave them with only a half knowledge of the truth, or even worse, a perverted teaching as to the requirements of the Gospel. Give me one convert made right, I repeat, and you may take your thousands of little "believers' cards," which mean practically nothing in the vast majority of instances. No wonder that skeptics are made. It is a wonder there are not more. The great percentage of skeptics are made by the *infidelity of professed Christians.* They mistake theology for Christianity. But there is a great difference between God's theology and man's. In this matter of baptism, for instance, man's theology says it is not essential, but God's theology says it is. Which will you have?

Yes, the Christian Church makes this subject of baptism quite prominent, because it is compelled to so long as others continually neglect it, or if they do notice it at all, it is often to attack us for our position on the question. You remember that when the walls of Jerusalem were being rebuilded, Nehe-

miah commanded the workmen that wherever they heard the sound of the trumpet, thither should they all resort. The trumpet was the danger signal, and signified that the enemy was about to attack at a certain point. Well, it seems that our religious neighbors are very jealous of us in our efforts to restore the old walls of Apostolic teaching and practice, and they persist in assaulting us at the point of baptism. Hence we have to sound the trumpet and call our forces to the defense of our position. And right well have we succeeded. Tens of thousands of the enemy have come over to us. We see alike on most points and ought to do so on this. Our work is telling. Many pedo-baptist churches are now putting in baptistries in order to accommodate those of their congregations who insist on immersion. Fewer and fewer infants proportionally are being sprinkled every year. I tell you the people are learning. Let the good work go on. The days of affusion are numbered, as are also the days of many creeds. We shall soon have less condemnation of any of the commandments of Christ, and see a more prompt and willing submissiveness to the simple, yet all-comprehensive plan of salvation as authorized in His Great Commission.

Notwithstanding the clearness with which the Disciples always present matters, there are some who assert that we teach that all sinners have to do is to go down into the water and be baptized. Over in Iowa certain jealous neighbors declared that all the Christian Church believed in was dipping; that after baptism our members might swear, steal, or get drunk, and yet remain saved. And out in a Kansas town where I once labored, there was a man who didn't like our people very much, and he took delight in peddling the same old falsehood, that all the Chris-

tian Church cared for was to get people under the water.

But what does the Great Commission say? Our belief and practice is in accord with that. Read carefully the third and fourth points:—"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.*" One might come forward here, and penitently make the good confession, and Brother Allen, your pastor, might baptize him in strict accordance with the demands of Scripture, and yet that individual might be lost. Baptism cannot save only in its place, and faith cannot save only in its place, and repentance cannot save only in its place, and prayer cannot save only in its place. All the elements must be linked together in order to save. What doth it profit if a man is baptized only to live the life of a drunkard? No matter though he might be dipped a thousand times, if he goes home and beats his wife, and cuffs his innocent children, and conducts himself like a beast, he will be lost, unless he penitently reforms. And what doth it profit a young man or a young woman to be baptized, and then go to the average theater? When you go down to that questionable amusement hall, that savors of lust and all uncleanness; when you witness these many unhallowed things that would make you blush for shame if in the presence of that Christian mother who is at home praying for you, what, under such circumstances, does baptism amount to? Nothing to you, of course, for you are satan's choicest catch.

Oh, my friends, you must assuredly be baptized, but afterwards you must also faithfully "observe all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded you." He teaches us to pray, to endure persecution, to

make sacrifices, to spend and be spent in His service, and, in short, to surrender self completely to the will of Almighty God. In his second epistle Peter outlines our duty pointedly when he says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Our people have often made a serious mistake in teaching the people the first principles of Christianity and then leaving them without further care. For instance, a preacher goes to some country school house and commences a "protracted meeting." He preaches a series of sermons about as follows:— 1st, The Divinity of Christ; 2nd, The Divisions of the Bible; 3rd, Faith; 4th, Repentance; and 5th, Baptism. This is all very well as far as it goes. But the mistake comes in stopping here and reporting a "great meeting at Pleasant Valley. Organized a church with fifty members, and appointed a plurality of elders and deacons, etc." These officials perhaps are men who have just come into the church, and who are utterly incompetent to fill the important positions to which they have been assigned. The little flock, being left thus to "edify one another," with no shepherd to lead them, soon falls to wrangling, or else dies a natural death from inactivity. It is impossible to tell how many congregations have been thus established, or rather not established. It is too bad. The Great Commission plainly insists that we should watch over these young converts, and train them in the way of life. If they fall down, we must help them up, and not give them a kick, saying, "I didn't expect anything better of you anyway; that is usually the way with Evangelist So-and-So's converts."

There is a little "fad" among a certain class of pastors nowadays to say, "We don't want an evangelist; we prefer to conduct our own special meetings, believing that the converts made will hold out better." I heard of one pastor remarking that he would rather have one person come to him on the street and express his determination to become a Christian than to have many press forward under the labors of an evangelist. But how many will come on the street? Very few. The history of conversions proves that the vast majority of those who come to Christ come during revivals. The time will never come when the evangelist will not be needed to *stir up the people.* But when once they are stirred up, it is the pastor's business to keep them stirred. He must "teach them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded." The new convert as well as the "worldling" needs to be instructed to do what God says, in God's way.

At this juncture I imagine brave Peter's heart fell; and John, hopeful as he was, looked serious and thought this a great task the Master had commanded. Possibly they said, "The Jews are our sworn enemies; we will be turned away from their synagogues, and everywhere difficulties will beset us. Oh, dear Master, the burden you have laid upon us is so great!"

And if left to carry it alone, they had been right. But Jesus has not yet concluded. The "peroration" of His brief discourse, if so we call it, is one of the grandest things of all history, and has perhaps done more to cheer disciples on to victory than any other equal number of words ever spoken. The Saviour discerned the misgivings of his beloved followers, and was quick to meet the same with the climax of promises. Listen! "*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen!*"

How wonderfully sweet are those words, and how far-reaching! The promise reaches right up to heaven, right up to God, right up to the pillars of glory! I always liked that sweet hymn of Fanny Crosby's which seems to be so full of trust in this last promise of Jesus:—

"All the way my Saviour leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt his tender mercy,
Who through life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know whate'er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well."

No, it does not make any difference where we are, He will be with us. We may go down by the cold, dark river of folly, disappointment and death; but He will be with us, and, if we but trust Him fully, He will lead us up the mountain side to victory at last. He will lead us through the darkness into the light!

So go on without fear. God has given you a work to do; then do it in His way. Never mind what the world may say; the devil will always be offended if you do your duty. You may expect to offend him; you will hardly be doing right if you fail to beat him in every way possible, and on all occasions. I want to take all the money I can away from him for Christ. I want to tear all the power and influence I can out of his wicked hands for my Master. The devil is no friend of man, and we should look him squarely in the face and shout sternly, "Get thee behind me, Satan." We should never be afraid of him, for Christ will be with us always.

But the young convert must remember that he can't go sailing up to heaven on "flowery beds of ease." The poet was right when he said, "Sure I must fight if I would win." Yes, the Saviour calls for soldiers

of the Cross, who will go out in the highways and byways and contest with Satan for every unregenerate heart. It is our business to bring the weary and heavy-laden to Jesus, He will heal them with the "Balm of Gilead."

Go on, then, in the march of faith. If you ever fall, or feel that you are about to fall, oh, lean heavily upon this precious promise of Christ, "Lo, I am with you always." For whether down in the valley or up on the mountain's top; whether in adversity or prosperity, the sweet voice of our Captain will be heard saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Over in Switzerland there is some wonderful scenery. To be fully appreciated it must be viewed from the summit of a tall mountain peak. But the ascent is very difficult and dangerous. But if the traveler wishes to climb the height, a trusty guide comes along and says, "I will take you up safely." The guide is familiar with all the winding paths and perilous abysses. He is not afraid of the dangerous avalanches and mighty snow-slides for which the Alpine ranges are noted. He fastens one end of a strong rope around the traveler's body, and ties the other end to his own, after which the pair begin the ascent. When the sturdy mountaineer sees the snow-slide coming he knows just what to do to keep from being overwhelmed. The traveler stumbles often, but the faithful guide holds him up. Many times you feel that you will surely fall and be lost, but that strong man, with his feet planted firmly on the rocks, supports you. Finally you reach the summit of the mountain and behold the indescribable beauty of Switzerland's bewitching scenery.

Thus at the foot of the mountain of life stands the Son of Man, willing and able to guide us. He stands

ready to throw about us His strong arms of love; and if we will only let Him, He will lead us up the winding and dangerous paths of this hard life, and at last we shall find our feet firmly planted on the summit of Mount Zion, where we will behold all the glories of the New Jerusalem, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband!"

God help us, then, to be true to all the demands of this great commission. May we fight valiantly the good fight of faith, and at last win the victor's crown! Jesus is the "Captain of our Salvation." Let us neglect no duty He has laid upon us.

Are there not those here to-day who want to march with us! Are there not those here who would take the "sword of the spirit," and the "shield of faith," and who would have their "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," ready to do battle for the Lord? Are there not those here who are willing to go out and fight like Spartans? If so, come, and enlist in God's own appointed way. A heroic life is the Christian's, a life of glorious conquest. So come thou with us, and we will do thee good! Come, and you will not only bring peace and joy to your own heart, but inexpressible gratitude to the hearts of others who are praying for you.

WHERE SHALL I SPEND ETERNITY?

I was surely surprised when I came into the building this evening to find so many present. I remarked to Mrs. Hall as we were coming over that I supposed we would have but about a "baker's dozen" present, the weather is so very inclement. I thank you very much for braving the storm. It proves that you are deeply interested in the work, and I wish to express my appreciation of your zeal and courage. Rain or shine, hot or cold, the people of God should never neglect the sanctuary. Eternal destiny is at stake, and it behooves us one and all to be faithful under every circumstance.

"Where do you expect to spend Decoration Day?" That is a question that a great many ask each other about the 25th of May each year. It is a precious day all over this great nation, and there are few loyal Americans who do not observe it in one way or another.

A little later the question is, "Where do you expect to spend the Fourth of July?" I vividly remember that this was a very important question all through my youth. My father was a farmer, and he allowed me five cents a scalp for all the gophers I trapped, and two cents for squirrels. By the first of July, I had usually earned a neat little sum, and it became an important question as to how and where I should spend that money. I would post up the best I could from the pages of our country paper, and read all the handbills I could find, and then when

all we neighbor boys met at Sunday School we would talk matters all over and determine on a course of action for the greatest national holiday.

Five months later each year the question is, "Where are you going to spend Thanksgiving Day?" And later still, "Where are you going to spend your Christmas?" These are always interesting questions both to children and to old people. How anxiously each year Grandpa and Grandma look forward to Thanksgiving, when the children will all gather about the old hearthstone once more, coming from east, west, north and south, all eager to show off their babies, and to eat pumpkin pie again at the dear old home! And then Christmas—blessed Christmas! "What did you get?" is the watchword of the little folks for a week afterwards.

Then again in June we have two predominating questions: First, "Whom are you going to marry?" and second, "What are you going to do after school?" In this beautiful month we will have college commencements all over the land. Our three or four hundred colleges and universities annually turn out thousands of bright graduates, and the boys and girls spend many happy hours discussing future prospects.

"Where are you going to spend your vacation?" is a July and August question among over-worked business and professional men.

Now these are all momentous questions. I would not for a moment underestimate their importance. But we have for consideration to-night a far more weighty question than any of these I have just propounded. It is a question that reaches beyond the clouds, and moves the heart of man as nothing else can. Listen!

"WHERE SHALL I SPEND ETERNITY?"

If I should stand here and ask in the usual form,

"Where do *you* expect to spend Eternity?" the young men in yonder row might think I was talking to the young men across the aisle. So I want every Christian in the house, and every person not a follower of Christ, to ask the question of themselves to-night. Make it emphatically personal: "Where shall *I* spend Eternity?" It is without doubt the most important problem that will ever be brought before us for solution. Questions of faith and doctrine are important, and should be carefully considered. Every intelligent Christian should investigate the tenets of his religion. We should all endeavor to know what this means, and what that means. And yet all questions of doctrine are insignificant in themselves except as they have bearing on this question. All other questions, whether of politics, science, of religion or the arts, are of secondary importance to this one, because upon our answer to this question hangs our eternal welfare.

And yet, important as it is, very few, comparatively, are earnestly discussing it.

"Where shall I spend Eternity?" I expect to spend it in a good place. And you can't find a man in Chicago, I suppose, however wicked he may be, who does not expect to get better before he dies, and so spend Eternity in a better place. But this careless way of putting off our duty is very uncertain. We shall have no opportunity of getting better beyond the present life. Unless we get better now there is no hope for a happy hereafter. Hence every living person should put the best thought of his life upon these matters. This existence can be but brief at best, perhaps three score years and ten, perchance four score. What then? How short is T-I-M-E! Short in spelling; short in reality. How long is E-T-E-R-N-I-T-Y! Long in spelling; long in reality. The

manner in which you spend *time* will settle your location for ETERNITY.

It is hard to get the world to believe in a Day of Judgment, and yet it is coming, as sure as there is a God in heaven. You cannot believe otherwise if you are consistent. We find that the inspired writers of the Bible again and again give us startling revelations on the subject.

Take, for instance, the 16th chapter of Matt. and 27th verse: "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." When will this occur? On the Day of Judgment. At least the world's greatest commentators so agree.

In Romans 14:10, we have this language: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ." It is so hard to get men to believe this. They live in sin too much. They yield to appetite, lust, and the pride of life. They love earthly pleasures. They do not want to think about giving a final account for the many evil deeds done in the body. They do wrong to make money, or to gratify some sinful desire, and they do not want to be reminded of a Day of Judgment. But the apostle declares that "we shall all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ." And Paul was inspired. In writing these solemn words he indited the mind of our Maker. God never deceives His children, and when He warns us that we must all prepare to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, He means it. So surely as we sit here to-night, so surely shall we stand at the bar of eternal judgment at the last day. The burning thought for the soul is, when He summons us will we be ready to go and look into His all-wise face?

In 2 Cor. 5:10, we read:—"For we must all

appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Thus twice has Paul recorded this statement with reference to the Judgment Seat of Christ. And in asserting that we shall all be judged according to the deeds we have done in the body, he but voices the expressed sentiment of Job, and David, and Jesus himself. It is a matter that should call forth the most serious meditation and resolution.

If we were to be judged to-night according to the deeds done in the body, oh, what would we each receive? This judgment will reach every one, the old man and the young man, the mother, the wife, the child. Not one accountable person shall escape the final examination. Would to God it might solemnize our hearts and urge every careless son of Adam to get ready without delay to meet the Great Judge of the quick and the dead.

Hebrews 9:27, 28: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." He has not appeared the second time yet, but he will appear in His own good time. In Him only have we hope. If we believe and obey Him we shall have fullness of joy; but if we neglect to walk in His footsteps we shall be undone forever.

A little boy who has not disobeyed papa and mamma is not afraid to meet them and to look into their faces. Witness his happy expression as he bounds into the room after doing some errand for them. He says, "Papa, I have done what you and mamma told me to do." And he expects to be rewarded and praised for it. But if the lad has been

told to carry in a load of wood, for instance, but instead of obeying goes out the back way and plays, he fears to meet the parental countenance. Two or three times mamma calls to him, "Johnny, why don't you bring me that wood?" but he keeps on playing. When the dinner bell sounds he realizes that he is awfully hungry, but he is slow to respond. He doesn't go bounding in to meet papa with that expectant look which characterizes the obedient child. No, he is almost afraid to enter the dining-room for fear that mamma will look at him askance. So it will be with us, my brother, if we persist in trampling our Father's commandments under foot. If we shall have turned away from Him all our lives, it will be with shame-covered faces that we at the bar of judgment meet Him. But if we shall have kept His commandments, we will then be joyful, knowing that He will say: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Allow me to quote one more passage, John 12:48, for this reason, that so many think if they live up to what they believe to be right, or, in other words, if they live up to their honest convictions, they will be saved. And I am here to assert that if honest convictions ever save at all, it is because they happen to accord with the law of Jesus Christ; in which case it is faith and obedience after all, and not the individual's theories. This idea of simply according with some personal standard is becoming too common. A great many seem to think that if they live up to the rules of the Masonic lodge, or of the Odd Fellows, or of the K. of P.'s, or whatever human society they may chance to belong to, that they are all right, both for this world and the next. I am not here to make a special fight against any of these organizations. I do not belong to any of them, but I know a great many good men who do. All lodges have

good rules, I doubt not, that are helpful and wholesome so far as they go. But one may live up faithfully to all the rules and yet be lost, for they cannot carry the soul beyond the *dark river*. It is not the business of lodges to present Christ to the world as its only Saviour. Many lodge men do not even pretend to be believers in Christ. They set up a standard of their own, and imagine that if they live up to the self-appointed demands of conscience they will pass within the Pearly Gates without a question.

But listen to this verse from the Lord of Lords and King of Kings: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

When shall it judge him? Not in this life, but "in the last day," the "great and terrible day of the Lord," the day when all nations shall be assembled together for the final examination. Then shall this book be opened, the book of God, not the book of some lodge. And then shall the record of your life be read by the recording angel. Oh, what a moment it will be! All the deeds of your life are kept on record, and if you die unregenerate they will be brought to light, and presented in evidence against you. And this is right. If your life has not been clean; if you have not lived consistently; if you have ignored the counsels of this Divine Book, then you will be assigned to "outer darkness." But if your record is good, you will be assigned a place at God's right hand.

Where, then, shall *I* spend Eternity? To what abode will *I* be assigned after the judgment? What kind of a place will be my everlasting habitation? These are questions of vital interest to us all.

There are just two places beyond the Judgment,

and you and I will either go to one or the other. There is no half-way place, no go-between, no easy place on some division fence. We must "round up" in one place or the other. Which shall it be—God's Kingdom or Satan's?

Turn to Matthew, 25th chapter, and read from the 31st to the 35th verses inclusive. "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me." You observe there are just two places mentioned. In this passage one is called the Right Hand, and the other, the Left In other Scriptures one is called Heaven and the other Hell. In Luke's noted parable one is referred to as Abraham's Bosom; the other as the Place of Torment. Now in one of these places—in outer darkness or in glorious light—you and I will spend Eternity Oh, which will it be?

Now turn to the 16th chapter of the Book of Luke and read the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus: "There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich

man's table; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they that would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

You see from this parable (if it is a parable—some think the events described actually occurred—for the narrative states emphatically that "there was a certain rich man." Be this as it may, the lesson intended is the same, for a parable is simply a great truth in figure, and if the circumstances depicted here are figurative, may God deliver you and me from the real!) that the poor man, neglected and despised, died at the gate of plenty. The rich man also died surfeited with attentions. Both went straight to their rightful places. The rich man entered the fiery depths of hell, while the poor man entered the brilliant portals of a glorious life. The one lived wickedly, the other righteously.

And so it is in the present age. A rich man dies and the newspapers present a full account of his sickness and the last scenes around his death-bed. They tell where he was born, and where his father and grandfather were born, and what illustrious

things they have all done, running the family history back to the Revolution or the Mayflower. They eulogize him for what he has done for his country, for the business world, and for politics, and then conclude by saying that although the deceased was not a member of any church he was a good man, gentle in his family, true to his neighbors, and a friend of the poor. When I read such eulogies on men who have piled up their tens of thousands by grinding down the poor, as is often the case, I feel like shouting as loud as I can, BOSH! There is entirely too much of this blue-stocking, gold-wash business in the world to-day.

The poor man dies, and the notice of his death is printed in one corner of the newspaper among the advertisements. This is a very different obituary from the one contributed to the man whose wrong and perhaps previous ill-treatment caused the poor man's death. A whole column is devoted to the rich man's memory. See the big head lines:

"GONE TO HIS LONG REST."

"ONE OF OUR MOST DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS."

"THE CITY WILL MISS HIS EMINENT SERVICES."

The truth may be that he died of apoplexy brought on by strong drink. But no matter, he was *rich*. So they boast of his so-called charities, his unselfish career, and spotless record, when perhaps his private life has been that of a glutton and a libertine. They note the large number of carriages at his funeral, and the vast expense of his casket. They describe the location of his tomb, the fragrance of the many banks of flowers contributed by admiring friends, and the subtle influence of the band's exquisite dirges.

That's the way they bade farewell to Dives, I im-

agine; while away down among cheap locals appeared this other notice: "Lazarus, a familiar old pauper, who has been sick five or six years, died this morning at 7 o'clock. The remains were deposited in a rough box and taken out to the Potter's field in the patrol wagon."

But what did the angels think? I think they looked upon all these shams very differently from the way the thoughtless world looks at such things to-day. The angels come sweeping down through space, and with gentle hands they picked up the poor frail body of Lazarus, and with one touch of their magnetic fingers made it immortal.

Lazarus had doubtless been sick a long time. What little money he had saved up for a "rainy day," he had been compelled to spend in the payment of doctors' bills. When his money gave out their services ceased. At last his flesh was covered with sores, and the dogs of the street came and licked them! This is Luke's startling description, —a piece of literary realism hardly excelled in any language. But the poor, sick, hungry fellow was taken by the angels to Abraham's bosom, and there he found health and rest and joy eternal.

Not so with Dives. Although in this life he had never known want, he went down to a place of awful torment. Why? Because he had ever relied upon the things of this earth to save him, and not upon God. He had been so well satisfied with himself that he had given no thought to religion. He had been so absorbed, wrapped up in the present, that he grossly neglected preparation for the future. And thus it is with millions to-day.

Skeptics would like very much to overthrow the force of this parable, but they cannot do it. It is childish to say that God does not mean it,

and there is no hell. Take out this parable with its picture of hell and you may just as well take out faith with all its splendid pictures of heaven, for the same God who indited the 13th chapter of I. Corinthians also indited the 16th chapter of Luke with this remarkable parable. If there is no hell, then there is no heaven. The logic of the conclusion is inexorable.

The writer tells us that this rich man went to the place of torment, and "in hell he lifted up his eyes, and seeing Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, cried, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame."

But Abraham replied in substance, "Oh, no, I can't send Lazarus. It would not be consistent, for when you were upon the earth you had your good things; you had your elegant mansion; you had your carriages and coachmen; you had beautiful music; you had banquets fit for a king every day; you had beer delivered regularly at your back door; you had wine parties and balls; you went to the theater three or four times every week; you often passed right by the church door on prayer-meeting evenings, coldly remarking that 'that sort of thing was good enough for women and children, but too tame for strong-minded men;' in short, my son, you lived for self only, while all this time there lay this poor man begging at your gate for the necessary crumbs to keep soul and body together. You knew him to be a good man; you remembered how you and he were boys together; you knew that he was just and honest and that he lived a pure life all through his afflictions; and yet in your ill-gotten wealth you had no conscience on his behalf. You

had what the world calls good things while Lazarus had evil things; but now the tables are turned and you must submit to evil things because you deserve them, while Lazarus shall forever enjoy good things, because his faithful life has merited a glorious reward."

Seeing that the matter was irrevocably settled, Dives said, "I pray Thee then, Father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." But Dives persisted, "Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent."

But Abraham closed the interview by saying, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

And it is just so to-day. I surmise that if a man should arise from his grave in one of your beautiful cemeteries—some man whom you all knew very well —and say in sepulchral tones loud enough for the whole city to hear, "Get ready for the judgment! I have been there and found it to be a reality. I beg you to quit your meanness and prepare to meet God! I implore you to stop speculating on that miserable Board of Trade; to stop lying to make money; to stop your drinking and swearing and dissipating, for the Day of Final Reckoning is at hand!" some few would stop and chat with him seriously; others would laugh at the white thing, and the papers would have a picture of the man taken in his grave-clothes, with a two-column write-up couched in startling but jocular rhetoric. A few superstitious persons might possibly give up their meanness for a while, but not many. So powerful

is the devil's influence, that should a whole cemetery full of people rise from the grave at once and run hither and thither, everywhere crying, "Prepare to meet thy God!" the world would continue just about as wicked.

Thus Abraham was exceedingly wise in his final reply. "And besides," he said, "there is a great gulf fixed between Lazarus and you, and neither can cross over to the other."

What does this mean? It means that there is just two places beyond this life. There is no go-between place. When you pass the Judgment Bar of God it is all over with you. If you have wasted this life in sin you are lost forever, and that's the end of it. *There is no second probation.* The Catholics claim that there is a "purgatory," and that you can pay money to the priest, and he can pray your departed friends out, and get them into Glory at last. But the Catholic idea of purgatory is not taught in the Word of God, and likewise the Protestant idea of a second probation is utterly foreign to the Scriptures. There is not a single passage in the Bible which can be consistently used in proof of either of these theories.

On the other hand the parable of Dives and Lazarus, if people will be honest with themselves, and honest with the Book of God, cannot fail to convince the thoughtful that there is no chance beyond the Judgment. Our future is practically determined here. If we live right we will go to the place God has prepared for us. If we don't live right, we will be assigned a place in Satan's dominions among all those who, like ourselves, have ignored the call of Heaven. If you think it won't make any difference how you live anyhow, and that when you die that will be the end of it, you will find out differently, to your everlasting sorrow.

It don't make any difference what our circumstances are in this life, there is a place where we will all meet on the same level. I suppose people who live in palaces on the Lake Front boulevards would hardly notice a poor washer-woman on Labor Avenue. Even if she were in bitter trouble they would pass by on the other side. Here the extremely rich and the extremely poor seldom neighbor with each other. But it makes no difference whether they neighbor with each other or not, the time will come when the rich man and the poor man, the educated and the ignorant, the white and the black, the bond and the free, will all meet on the same level, for God is no respecter of persons. I once baptized a black man in Kansas, whereupon some people made sneering remarks about our taking negroes into the church. There were very few colored people in the town, for there was a strong prejudice against them there. Some of our own members thought they would not like to be baptized in the same water that a negro was baptized in, and suggested that the water in the baptistry should be changed!

But the time is coming when the white man will be no better than the black man. That time is DEATH. When the angel comes with his long historic scythe, and sweeps through a neighborhood, it makes little difference what your standing in society is, or how large your bank account may be, or what your pretentions to a superior moral life are. No matter where you are or what you are, when your appointed time comes that scythe will cut you down like the rest. So it seems to me that we ought to be thinking more about the hereafter. We ought to be deciding in which place we propose to spend eternity, Heaven or hell. In one place or the other every

man, woman and child in this audience must spend the endless cycles of eternity.

"Where shall I spend Eternity?" is a far more important question than, "Where am I going to live, and what business shall I follow in this life?" even if we should live fifty, or sixty, or three score and ten years. It is an awful thing to grow old without Christ! Show me a man who has lived four score years without yielding his heart to the softening and sweetening influences of the gospel, and I will show you one who as a rule everybody wishes would die. The children are too often glad when the good old people die, not to mention the bad ones.

We can only live a few years at most. Did you ever think how short life is? Even if we should live 100 years, we "will spend our days as a tale that is told," as the Psalmist says. On the other hand, *Eternity!* How wonderful is the sweep of that word—ETERNITY! Where shall we spend it?

It will make little if any difference in the end whether we live in London or in Chicago, in Germany or America, in city or in village. The important thing is, are we getting ready for E-T-E-R-N-I-T-Y?

We only *begin* to live here. Over There is where we really LIVE. Oh, I would to God that I could impress those of you who have been putting off this great matter of salvation with the stupendous significance of the words TIME and ETERNITY. The one is but a little drop in the ocean as compared with the other And yet many conduct themselves as if this life were all. TIME is given us to prepare for ETERNITY. And as there are two different states beyond, one of joy and the other of misery, we should be sure that we make no mistake in our preparations.

"But I don't believe in the orthodox hell," says

one. "I don't believe we poor sinners will be compelled to burn and burn forever."

Well, I don't know just what and where hell is. I don't believe myself that it is a literal lake of fire and brimstone. That language in Revelation is figurative. But as the figurative is always a mere attempt of language to describe the real, hell must be a place beyond description in horror.

Some advance the idea that hell is total annihilation—destruction—oblivion. But how much better would that be? If there is anything dear to the human heart, it is the instinct of life. The thought of being obliterated, or cast into oblivion once and forever, is about as repulsive as anything else, it seems to me. I cannot see wherein it is much more pleasant than the thought of burning in that figurative lake. No, I don't believe in the total annihilation theory. And yet I cannot speak very definitely as to the *what* or the *where* of hell. I don't think we will settle that question this side of the judgment. All we can say positively is that hell is banishment from the presence of God, and that's enough. No wonder it is called a place of "outer darkness." God is light and warmth, and love. It will be a sad thing for us if we have so carelessly lived here as to be driven from His presence at the last day. And not from His presence only, but from the presence of our loved ones. Banished from the Gates of Pearl! Driven away from the presence of Abraham and all of the redeemed! Driven away from Jesus! Driven away from the angels, and from the music of heavenly love which shall ring through the corridors of glory forevermore! Ah! that would be hell.

Well, whatever and wherever it is, I don't want to go there, and I don't want any of my friends to go

there. But *you* will go there, many of you, as true as you are living beings to-night, if you don't *turn about*, *face*, and strive with all your hearts to live a Christian life.

The only way to go to the other place, Heaven, is to believe and obey Christ. If you will come and give your hearts to the Lamb of God, He will take away your sins, and redeem you from the power of Satan. If we have Christ's love in our hearts and lives we can say, "Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave, where is thy victory?" If we walk in the footsteps of Jesus, we can say, "I am not afraid of the Judgment, for I know that my Lord will say, 'Well done.'" The Christian is not afraid of death, for to die means to go HOME.

I would that we all had a faith as strong as Basil, bishop of Nes-Ceserea in 370 A. D. The Roman emperor, Valens, threatened to confiscate his goods. But the grand old saint replied in substance, "I have not very much; only some rags and a few books. If you want my goods take them, but you can't take the truth from me."

He was then threatened with banishment and death. His reply was a noble one: "None of these things touch me. Banishment I know not; for, as the guest of God, all places are alike to me. For martyrdom I am unfit, but death is a benefactor if it send me speedily to Heaven."

Oh, why not believe and obey the Word of God now? Why not consecrate your life to Christ to-night? Why not surrender all your life, your hopes and your purposes to Jesus once for all, and say to Him, "Take me, Lord, and use me." If you will do this you will not be afraid to hear the death angel's call. You will not be afraid to stand before the Judgment bar of heaven. You will not be afraid of the grave, for you will know that ALL IS WELL.

"For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

That precious promise is for Christians. It was never intended for those who do not give their hearts to the Son of God. Many persons quote it and apply it to themselves who have no right to do so. The sinner who does not try to obey the Word of God, and who has never committed himself to the Lord, has no right to that precious promise. It is not for those who trample under foot the laws of Heaven. Jesus said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." To those only who really love God and try to keep His commandments is it promised that "all things shall work together for good."

It may be that in serving Christ you will have to make many sacrifices. It may be that you will have to endure persecution and submit to much that is unpleasant from a worldly point of view. But whether this Christian service is pleasant or unpleasant, we read that "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4:17.)

Dear, unsaved friend, let me prevail upon you to make the start to-night Come on board the gospel ship now! Decide quickly, and lay your hand in the almighty hand of Jesus! Come out of the darkness of doubt into the light of His presence, where there is joy and peace and rest forevermore! Oh, turn heavenward while it is called to-day!

Remember there are but two places beyond,—Heaven and hell. For which are you bound? In one place or the other you will spend Eternity. Oh, which? Are you bound for the place where your sainted mother is? and where Christ is? and where all the redeemed are? Or are you bound for the place where all murderers, all blasphemers, all haters of God and workers of evil are?

"*Where shall I spend Eternity?*" Young man, decide to-night, because, soon—very soon to some of us perhaps—will come the final summons. We will be called to give an account for the deeds done in the body. I will be compelled to give an account for all the sermons I have preached, and you will have to give an account for all the invitations of the Gospel you have neglected. Each will be rewarded according to his deserts. It is a solemn thought. We will all be compelled to give an account, not only for the things done, but for the things we should have done but left undone. Perhaps you are saying to yourself, "My life has not been so very bad; surely God won't let me be lost." But you have all along neglected to accept Jesus, and that is a grievous sin of omission. So I entreat you to-night to come to Him. Come and through contact with his blood be transformed into the image of God.

"*Where shall I spend Eternity?*" It is a question that you must settle sometime. Why not settle it now? To-morrow may be too late!

"*To-day* the Saviour calls,
For refuge *fly!*
The storm of vengeance falls,
And *death* is *nigh!*"

DISTINGUISHING PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Acts 28:22—"But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against." This is not my text. It used to be the text of our preachers when they preached on the distinguishing principles of the Christian Church. But now it is somewhat out of date, and I must look elsewhere for an appropriate verse of scripture.

Fifty years ago our preachers and people were everywhere spoken against. Fifty years ago we were grateful if we could get a corn-crib or a school-house to preach in. Sometimes we were allowed to open up in a church building; but the doors of the various denominations were usually closed against us. But it is not so to-day; we are *orthodox!* This has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of everybody at all posted. A few years ago, you may remember, there was a big trial over the matter in the State of Indiana, and our orthodoxy was proven in court! We have gotten out of the childish clothes of uncertainty and put on the habiliments of a robust manhood. To-day we are increasing faster, proportionately, than any other church in America. This is proven by the census report of 1890. We are very popular now; so popular that our people are represented almost everywhere. One of our preachers sits regularly with the distinguished body of men who select the International Sun-

day School lessons. And at all of the great Endeavor conventions we have numerous representatives, for as Francis E. Clark says, the two movements are closely allied. Hence it would not be appropriate now to say "this body is everywhere spoken against," for it is not.

But I trust I may not be regarded presumptuous in saying that we are the same people, doctrinally and practically, that were spoken against eighteen hundred years ago. It will therefore, doubtless, be interesting to strangers to know something about the distinguishing principles of this church.

In a political campaign it is interesting to know the distinguishing principles of the different political platforms, and what they propose to do. So in religious bodies it is interesting to know the whats, the whys, and wherefores they have to offer. Just now there is a great deal of talk in the press about Dr. Teed and his angels. Everybody wants to know where they are going to live and what they are going to do. And over at Rockford there is much talk of the same nature about Schweinfurth and his deluded followers. We Americans do not care so much for what a man pretends to be as for *what he is.* Not what is a man's theory, but *what is he doing?* That is the idea with most people now, and I am glad of it.

Now this church has recently removed into a great hall and the eyes of strangers are upon you as never before. Questions will naturally arise, "Who are these people?" "Where are they from?" "What have they done?" "What do they propose to do?" "What are the distinguishing features of their plea?" I am here to-night to answer these questions, briefly, but I trust concisely and plainly.

Jude 3:—"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was need-

ful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for"—Calvinism? Is that it? No, sir! "Exhort you that you should earnestly contend for"—Arminianism? Is that it? No, sir! Then what? The masses don't know anything about Calvinism, Arminianism, and the various other isms of the theological world. And what is more, they don't care anything about them either. The average person knows very little about Tertullian, Augustine, Melanchthon, Zwingle, Chrysostom, or any of the old church fathers. Theological students may enjoy studying about these things, but the masses prefer the bread of life. So what does the text say? Notice: "that you should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints."

Not to contend earnestly for any creed devised of men; not to contend earnestly for any articles of faith framed by any religious council on earth; but to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered by inspired men chosen of God. How infinitely superior is this work to that of quarreling over the speculations and traditions of selfish men!

I want to suggest right here that the principal reason why we are separated from other religious peoples, and compelled to stand in a class by ourselves, is that we insist on carrying out this injunction to the letter! We insist on preaching the same gospel that Peter preached to the Jews eighteen hundred years ago, when they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The apostle Peter told them what to do in language as clear as a sunbeam, and we are here to urge people to do that same thing now. Thus we are doctrinally and practically like the ancient disciples. We are striving to please God rather than man; and to present the Gospel in its simplicity and purity, with charity towards all, and malice towards none.

In many respects, I am glad to say, we are just like other religious bodies. In *very many* of the more important particulars we agree with all the evangelical denominations. For instance, on the subject of faith. Now all other evangelical bodies believe in faith, believe in its necessity, power, and efficacy; so do we.

All orthodox religious bodies believe in repentance, believe that no one can be saved without repentance; so do we. We constantly hold that it is utterly impossible to enter Heaven without repentance toward God in the name of Christ.

Others believe in the importance of prayer; so do we.

Others believe in holy living; so do we.

Others believe in keeping the Lord's Day holy (they call it the Sabbath; we don't); so do we.

Others believe in godliness, holiness, sanctification; so do we, Scripturally; but we don't believe in some of the crack-brained theories on these subjects advocated by some of our religious neighbors. For instance, the chimerical notions of faith cure which are agitating so many people. We don't believe that God is going to work a miracle to-day on our individual behalf. This is not faith but ignorant presumption. The people who compose the Christian Church do not believe that God is going to cure a man of rheumatism, or anything else, unless he himself puts his body in a condition to recover, and observes the laws of nature. Many religious fanatics are running wild with faith healing theories nowadays, but there is one church that don't believe in setting aside God's Word for the shallow deductions of Christian Science, falsely so-called, for Joseph Cook was right when he said that this new fad was neither Christian nor science.

No, the Christian Church don't believe in these offshoot theories of the sectarian churches. But in nearly all the essential doctrines we agree with them. I rejoice to say that on the great subject of temperance we can clasp hands with the foremost. And when it comes to infidelity it is enough to call your attention to the fact that for a half century nearly three-fourths of the discussions held with representatives of so-called free thought have been successfully conducted by our people. We believe with all evangelical churches in God the Father, in Christ the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter promised by our Lord and Master. We believe in world-wide evangelization, and, in short, in everything authorized by the Word of Truth.

And still there are some very important differences between us and other religious bodies, and hence the subject for consideration in this sermon, *distinguishing principles*.

Before I proceed further perhaps I should give some definitions. What is to be understood by the term "Christian Church?" Some understand us to refer in its usage to a particular religious body that was brought into existence by Alexander Campbell and his coadjutors. We have been called "Campbellites." But truthfully speaking, Alexander Campbell had nothing whatever to do with the founding of the Christian Church; he simply advocated a return of all God's wandering people to the original foundation. He pleaded for a return to apostolic, New Testament Christianity; for the throwing aside forever of all the creeds and doctrines of men. He urged the followers of Christ everywhere to take the Bible and the Bible alone as their rule of faith and practice. He argued that no one should be asked to do more nor less than the Bible requires. A favorite motto of our

people has ever been, "Where the Bible speaks we speak; where the Bible is silent we are silent." This position shuts out all human names. Hence we call ourselves the "Christian Church;" or as some prefer, the "Church of Christ," which means identically the same thing. Not Paul's Church, nor Wesley's Church, nor Campbell's Church, but Christ's Church. The terms Church of God, and Church of the First Born are also Scriptural, and refer to the same body of people. You may have noticed that I never speak of our people as a "denomination." The Church of Christ is not denominational, and we should never say, as our neighbors always do, "our denomination." When applying to the railroads for a clerical permit, they usually give me a blank calling for the name of my "denomination." I always cross out the unsanctified word, and put in "Christian Church." No; God's Church was never a denomination, and it never will be. Our people should remain undenominational and unsectarian, for this is the will of the Great Head of the Church. Our plea along these lines has resulted in the greatest union movement in the nineteenth century, and we should be careful ever to keep the distinctive tenets of our belief constantly in view.

We have at the present time about one million members, largely in the central and western states of the Union. In Indiana we have about 100,000 In the state of Illinois, 70,000. In Missouri, 130,000. We have churches in Boston, New York, London, Toronto, and other great cities. In New Zealand we have numerous churches, one of which numbers far into the hundreds in membership. We are beginning to spread out. In Melbourne, Australia, we have more than twenty churches. In Kansas City, ten; in Louisville, a dozen; in Cleveland, fifteen. We have 6,000 clergymen, and 9,000 congregations. We have

several great colleges and numerous religious papers. In short, in all that goes to make a great religious people, we stand among the most aggressive and wide-awake religious bodies of the world.

Well, in what respect do we differ from our religious neighbors?

First of all, in our teaching regarding Christ. "But," you say, "I thought all orthodox bodies taught faith in Christ as an essential doctrine." Certainly they do, but we teach faith in Christ as *the* essential. All evangelical churches make faith in Christ simply one among other items of creed; but we make Christ the one all-comprehensive article of faith. When a person presents himself for reception into the Kingdom of Christ at our hands, we do not propound to him a multitude of questions, such as for instance, "Do you believe in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?" and, "Do you believe that these three are one?" and, "Do you believe that Christ died to reconcile the Father to the world?" (A creed-thought which is in direct opposition to the Word of God.) But we ask, "Do you believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?" And if the candidate says, "Yes, I do," that settles it. There is just one article in our Confession of Faith, and that is the Divinity of Christ. What more is necessary? If we really believe in Christ we easily accept all the rest that His religion demands. Can you mention any other religious body that receives a candidate for baptism on this one admission? It is a very simple way, 'tis true; but it is God's way, and why should we ask more? It exalts the Saviour to his rightful position as the only begotten and hence divine Son of God, and nothing less than this can suffice.

In the second place, we differ from our religious neighbors with reference to the various divisions of

the Bible and their respective authority over present generations. We teach that the Old Testament was intended more especially for the Children of Israel, and the New Testament for Christians. Moses wrote the first five books of the accepted canon especially for the descendants of Abraham and Jacob. The Mosaic Law was never intended to become universal. Every one of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament clusters about the Children of Israel primarily, and secondarily the coming of Christ and his kingdom. The Ten Commandments and the ceremonial laws of Leviticus were written especially for the Twelve Tribes of Israel, and were intended as a school-master to bring the world to Christ. (See Gal. 3:24.) But the Gospel takes in the whole world in its majestic sweep, Jews and Gentiles alike. We hold that no one can successfully and acceptably preach the gospel until he rightly divides and applies the Word of Truth. When a candidate comes to confess Christ, we do not go over into Leviticus and teach him the Law of Moses as binding upon him. The apostle Paul, referring to this, says in the second chapter of Colossians, that Christ took this old law out of the way, "nailing it to the cross." We have the essence of all the Ten Commandments in the New Testament and much more, but the fourth commandment as such was never engrafted in the Law of Christ. Christians are nowhere commanded to "remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." The Sabbath was an Israelitish institution only. We are taught by apostolic example to remember the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, not the seventh. This is the day upon which our blessed Master arose from the grave and it is fitting that we should make it a day of special service to God.

So we divide the Bible more consistently than any

other religious people in the world. We make it a specialty, and it is one of our strongest points. We insist that the laws of the Old Testament are not binding upon Christians; and yet we do not discard the Old Testament, as our enemies have sometimes averred. Isaac Errett, one of the leading lights in the councils of our people, declared that no disciple of Jesus could attain a full and proper development in Christ until he familiarized himself thoroughly with the Old Testament Scriptures. No, the time will never come when we can discard the great works of Moses, David, and the judges and prophets of Israel. And yet we should not apply their writings to this day and age. This is, however, a common and inexcusable blunder. Why, even Mr. Moody, whose name is precious to many thousands, once preached a sermon in this city on that most important of all subjects for the consideration of dying souls, "What shall I do to be saved?" He took his text from the Old Testament and preached his sermon from first to last without once quoting from the New Testament. What must the angels have thought to behold so noted a man declaring as binding to-day texts which were written for another age and people, and which were washed away by the blood of Christ nearly 1900 years ago!

I think this is one of the most noble things about the Christian Church, that we rightly divide the Word of God. You remember that Paul wrote to Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." And in the literal observance of this commandment we are eminently distinguished from other religious peoples.

Third: We are distinguished from other religious bodies in our teaching regarding the operation of the

Holy Spirit. You know that almost all orthodox bodies believe in the miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion. We do not. It is nonsense. If the Holy Spirit ever operates independently of the Word of Truth, why does He not convert the poor heathens who have never heard the gospel? In proof of His miracle-working proclivities, not to say eccentricities, our friends quote that often-abused passage in John's narrative, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." But if He operates independent of the preached Word, why does He blow on people in enlightened America, and not blow on the deluded Hottentot? We have often read that "God is no respecter of persons." But *if* the prevailing notion as to the operation of the Spirit is true, God *is* a respecter of persons.

The truth in the matter is that the Holy Spirit has never converted a man, from the beginning of time to the present day, independent of the Word of God and human agency. We believe that God has chosen us, his disciples, to carry His Word to the lost, and if we are faithful in this service the Holy Spirit will always accompany with power. You recall the last words of Jesus, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." He has laid upon us this great and pressing responsibility, and we should not shirk duty by attributing a work to the Holy Spirit never intended or promised. Rest assured that the Holy Spirit has never operated in one single instance independent of the Word of God, and He never will. In His wonderful prayer on the night of His betrayal, Jesus said, "Father, sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." (John 17:17.) We believe that the Holy Spirit came into the world as a Comforter of Christians,

and as John records, "to convict of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment to come." In conjunction with the Lord, and consecrated Christian hearts, no power can withstand His mighty work. But since the days of the Twelve and Cornelius, His efforts have been natural as distinguished from supernatural. This view of an important question removes a great deal of doubt, and consequently the Christian Church converts more skeptics proportionally than any other religious body.

You have often heard the question asked at revival meetings, "Did you get it?" or "Did you get through?" Get what? Get through what? I suppose they mean religion, as if it were something to be gotten miraculously. Many preachers talk as if it were something very mysterious, and convey the idea that in seeking for it maybe you will get it, and maybe not. You have doubtless heard testimonies like the following: "I was a long time getting through. I went to the altar night after night without relief. I lost much sleep, and my appetite failed. But at last a great light suddenly shone upon my soul." An Iowa man told me how he tried to get it for thirteen nights. But he failed to experience that miraculous change he had been taught to expect, and so he just quit trying and lapsed into skepticism. And at one place where I was laboring a gentleman gave me an account of his experience at the altar. He felt no change and was frank enough to say so. But the preacher urged him to stand up and say that he felt differently anyhow, assuring the earnest seeker that he was "too honest with himself." That gentleman almost lost all faith in religion, but he is a member of the Christian Church now, and rejoices in the simplicity and consistency of our teachings. I am confident that a very large percentage of our modern atheists are made by this mis-

erable, unscriptural, dangerous theory;—the offspring of a deformed theology, that men can't be saved without a special miracle.

There is no miracle in conversion. There are some mysterious things about it of course, as there are about every subject under Heaven. There are mysteries connected with the growing of grass, the budding of trees, and the creation of human species, for instance, which the greatest scientists of history have never yet penetrated. And yet we speak of these things as natural processes, and accept the fact without a doubt or murmur. So conversion is a natural process, and it is easy for every citizen of this or any other enlightened land to learn every step in conversion. No, there is nothing miraculous about it. And in this belief we are distinguished from all the great orthodox bodies. It is a point mightily in our favor too, and one that we cannot make stand out too clearly. It would be far easier to turn the masses to Christ if this old notion that God is going to work special miracles to save men could be gotten out of the way. When every man is made to realize that his salvation depends largely on his own efforts, he will go to work in earnest for his soul. But many are waiting to-day for God to convert them by some wonderful, miraculous demonstration, when they ought to be "working out their own salvation with fear and trembling." Don't wait for God to work it out for you, but, as Peter said on Pentecost, arise obediently and "save yourselves from this untoward generation." When we get this false theory out of the heads of the people, and they can be made to understand that the Holy Spirit does not operate independently, but always through the Word, and through human agency, it will be a long step towards the salvation of many millions now groping in darkness and uncertainty.

Fourth: We are distinguished from most orthodox peoples in our views regarding the design of baptism. Not the *action* of baptism, please notice; but the *design.* There are millions who believe just as we do concerning the meaning of the word "baptism." In this country there are perhaps three million Baptists alone, not to mention tens of thousands in other bodies, who believe in immersion as the only Scriptural way to baptize people. And over in the old country there are ninety millions in the Greek Church. The Greeks ought to know what the New Testament Greek word *baptizo* means. And it is significant that they never sprinkle or pour. Hence I say we are not to be distinguished from other religious bodies with regard to our views concerning the *action* of baptism; but we are when it comes to a consideration of the *design* of baptism. We believe that baptism is for, or in order to, the remission of sins. It is at baptism, as the crowning act of conversion, that the honest believer looks for forgiveness and peace. He has no right to expect the fruition of his hopes and prayers before.

"Are your people not like the Baptists in this respect?" says one. No; there is a wide difference. Baptists do not consider baptism an essential of salvation, but merely a church ordinance or Christian act. Dr. McArthur of New York, one of the most noted Baptist divines in this country, in a recently published sermon proves to the satisfaction of every honest thinker that immersion is the only Scriptural form of baptism. "And yet," he concludes, "the Baptist Church lets more people die unbaptized than any other body, for it does not believe the act essential to salvation." But we believe what the apostle Peter said in Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ *for the*

remission of sins." It is a divinely appointed step in the desired direction; it is something to be attended to before forgiveness can be experienced; it is the crowning act of conversion; it is, practically, the door into the joys of conversion and into the folds of the Church. Jesus taught the essentiality of baptism in order to salvation; and all through the history of the early Church immersion was universally practiced as the only Scriptural, normal form.

These conclusions are so logical and plain that it would seem that the whole religious world could not but be a unit on the subject. But human speculation, doubtless prompted by Satan, says, "It is a mere outward sign of an inward grace," and should not be regarded as more than "a mere church ordinance." So long as the second chapter of Acts remains, however, so long will the position of the Christian Church on this subject be invulnerable. And it is a matter of great moment, for a faithful observance of the command of baptism in its proper place in the scheme of redemption would speedily dispense forever with the mourner's bench and all similar abnormal systems of so-called "getting religion." The result would be ten genuine conversions where there is one to-day.

Fifth: We are to be distinguished from others in our views regarding the name question. We believe that God's people and God's Church should wear only Scriptural names. "Bible names for Bible things," has long been one of our watch-crys. And with William Chillingworth we believe that "the Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants." We do not believe in using the "language of Ashdod;" so we discard all human appellations. In this we stand almost alone in the religious world to-day. There are a few lesser bodies, I believe, who claim to discard human names. For instance, I recall a

small body of people calling themselves "Christians," but nicknamed "New Lights." And another calling themselves the "Church of God," but nicknamed "Winebrennerians." But of all the larger orthodox bodies, we are the only church that insists on being strictly Scriptural in name. We honestly believe that it is wrong for Christians to adopt human names like Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, etc.

Somebody suggests that old saw that "there is nothing in a name anyhow," and that "a rose by any other name will smell as sweet." Well, let us see. Suppose I call you Humbug. We meet at a party, and I say, "How do you do, Mr. Humbug?" You would certainly take offense, and would not listen to me when I plead, "Oh, there's nothing in a name." Suppose I should call every church on Western Avenue, churches of Satan; what would you think? If I should speak of this church as the First Church of Satan, and yonder Methodist church as the Second Church of Satan, and all the members as *Satanites*. You would be justly incensed. And yet many have been saying, "Oh, there is nothing in a name. The people are just as good by one name as another, and it makes no difference what you call us." But this is all foolishness, and I have grown weary of hearing thoughtless people say, "There is nothing in a name." Why, there is everything in a name in one sense. "They shall *call his name Jesus*." Why? Because he shall *save* His people from their sins. What does "Jesus" mean? *Saviour*. The whole sum and substance of the Christian life is wrapped up in the *name* JESUS. "There is no other *name* under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," said Peter. (Acts 4:12.) And again, in Luke 24:47, we are told that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached *in His name* among all nations, beginning at

Jerusalem." And the Great Commission instructs us to baptize *in the name* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Take your concordance and look through the New Testament. It will surprise you to find how many times the expression "in His name" occurs. As there is no promise of salvation outside of the name of Jesus, the name question is one of tremendous import.

Turn to the first chapter of I. Corinthians, and read the apostolic rebuke there recorded for our instruction. Some of the disciples in that day said, "I am of Paul." Others said, "I am of Apollos." And others still, "I am of Cephas." But Paul taught them all to say, "I am of Christ." He says, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

No, we were baptized in the name of Christ, and when we wear a name of human invention, or the name of any man, we dishonor Christ and impede the progress of His church.

The Church is called "the bride." What would you think of a bride who wore some other name than that of her husband? Here is Mrs. Hall, for instance; we have been married a number of years. Now suppose she should get a peculiar notion in her head, and say some day, "George, I believe I will go by the name of Mrs. Brown hereafter."

I would naturally be astonished and exclaim, "Why?"

"Oh, because I think I should like the name better than Hall."

"But," I would say, "I would rather you wouldn't. Our marriage certificate is made out in my name, and our two little boys were born in the same."

"But," she replies, "of course I will love you just as well as ever, George, and I will be just as good a

wife as I have ever been; and as there is no difference in a name anyhow, I prefer henceforth to be called Mrs. Brown. I have some very dear friends wearing that name, and I think it very nice. Of course I am really Mrs. Hall, but from now on you will please address me as Mrs. Brown."

Would not that be a pretty way for my good wife to do? Would it not be treating me unkindly, not to say dishonestly? Very well: Christ is the bridegroom; the Church is the bride; and we dishonor Him when we wear any other name save our Lord's. If I should live a thousand years, I would never, God helping me, consent to wear any other name, even for a short time, than that of Christ.

We therefore teach that the Church should be called "The Church of Christ," or "Christian Church," or "Church of God," or "Church of the First Born," as all these names are Scriptural, and they honor Christ. But all human names dishonor Christ, as the principle is contrary to all reason and justice. Alexander Campbell was not cruelly murdered for us; John Wesley was not crucified for us; Martin Luther did not die for us. These were all grand, good men, and each name is worthy of admiration, but not of the reverence which belongs only to Christ.

Martin Luther tried to reform the Catholic Church; the Wesleys attempted a similar work with the Episcopalian; Alexander Campbell pleaded for a return to the apostolic order of things. They all did the world a great service, but they did not die for us. Nor did one of them want their followers to wear their humble names. It was the farthest thought from their noble minds. And I think the best way to honor Campbell, or Wesley, or Luther, or any other great reformer, is to simply follow Christ in name, belief, and practice. This course will honor

their memories more than by wearing some human title. Luther himself once wrote, "Call not yourselves *Lutherans*, but CHRISTIANS." And Wesley said, "I would that party names and party deeds were forgotten, and that all would sit at the feet of Jesus."

Oh, never wear any name save the name of Christ! If to-night you are wearing some human name as a sign of religious inclination or devotion, I implore you to discard it, and wear it no more. I am not here to say a single unjust word against any church or church member in the world. I would not have one single less Methodist or Presbyterian so far as individuals are concerned; but if I could I would have them all cease to be called Methodists and Presbyterians, for all these human names for God's people engender and perpetuate strife and division. Yes, I would have them all throw away their human names and be called simply CHRISTIANS, *no more and no less*. This would please our Heavenly Father. And if there were only one name for the One Divine Church, we could do more for Christ in forty-eight hours than we are now doing in that many months in our divided and warring state.

Sixth: We are distinguished from other orthodox bodies in our teaching on the creed-question. Now we have a creed. Did you ever hear anybody say we did not? Oh, yes. But *we have* a Creed! I don't like to hear anybody say that the Christian Church has no creed. That is a loose statement and our preachers and members should be careful never to make it. We have the best Creed in all the universe. No church could exist without a creed. Creed comes from the Latin word *credo*, and means *I believe*. How could we exist without some belief? What then is our belief, or creed?

Is it wrapped in thirty-nine, or thirty-three, or twenty-five articles of faith? No. In that sense we have no creed, never did have, and never expect to have. We have no Confession of Faith prepared by some of our prominent members and made binding upon the church, as other communions have. We don't believe in the old iron-bedstead system of regulating men's consciences by the invention of creeds —if one is too short, stretch him out; and if he is too long, cut him off! No, present generations are too intelligent for that. The day is rapidly passing when only doctors of divinity will be permitted to do all the prescribing of medicine for the sick souls of dying men. Creeds are too imperfect and narrow. The world demands something more universal in its sweep than any creed of man's devisement can possibly be. Some creeds have proven helpful for one generation, but hurtful for another. The race is advancing all the time, and it is impossible for some of the old, unscriptural dogmas of the various churches to stand much longer. The old Calvinistic idea of infant damnation, for instance, will soon have to go forever. It is repulsive to the world's better thought. Then pretty soon something else, which a more enlightened generation shall prove equally absurd, will have to go; and so on, till only that which is divine will remain. Thank God, the Christian Church has a Creed which will never need revision. It has not needed revision during a trial of eighteen hundred years, and we therefore feel safe in predicting for our Creed an unparalleled future.

What is our Creed? Some one suggests, "The Bible." Correctly speaking, no. Our belief is centered, not simply in book or paper; not simply in spoken or written word; not simply in the Gospel

story, sweet and wonderful as it is. But our Creed is JESUS THE CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED. We accept only a personal, living, loving, abiding Creed!

Christ said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." What rock? CHRIST.

Oh, Master, we believe in Thee! We believe in Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of Mary! We believe in Thee, dear Lord, and acknowledge Thee as the only begotten Son of God. We believe in Thee as the fulfillment of prophecy—as the long promised Messiah, and we know that whatsoever Thou hast said and done is good and right and abiding!

Yes, our Creed is Jesus,—a personal, living, loving, unchanging Creed. We endeavor to believe in Him practically too, so that what He tells us to do, we do; and where He tells us to go, we go; and where He tells us to stay, we stay. We remember that He said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." In carrying out this divine injunction we differ from the denominations. They all accept Christ in a way, of course, but they insist on patching up a creed, and bringing down through the ages a lot of musty old theological deductions which can never be made to accord either with the Bible or with this progressive age. If you believe in Christ to the extent of keeping His commandments, you must essentially believe the Bible. So what more is necessary?

Seventh: We are distinguished from nearly all other churches in our belief and practice regarding the Lord's Supper, commonly but incorrectly styled the "sacrament." We believe that the Lord's Supper should be regarded simply as a sweet memorial service. I never like to hear this blessed institution spoken of as the sacrament. That savors too much of Catholicism and the dark ages.

We don't believe in the old doctrine of transub-

stantiation—that the bread becomes the actual body of Christ, and the wine the actual blood. This view is an impious assumption. We are taught in God's Holy Book to regard the bread as a mere representation of the body of Jesus, and the wine as a mere representation of His blood. When we partake of these emblems, sanctified by prayer to a sacred use, we see with the mind's eye the broken body of our Lord, and His shed blood. The picture, sad and solemn as it is, fills our hearts with gratitude to our Lord for the great sacrifice made because of our sins, and we resolve anew to give our lives to His precious service more wholly and unreservedly than we have ever done before. This, it seems to me, is the true character and purpose of the Lord's Supper.

We believe in observing it on the first day of every week, because on the first day of the week, as it began to be dawn—very early in the morning—when the Marys came to the sepulchre, they found the Lord had risen. From that day to the present, not a single Lord's Day has ever passed, I presume, but what somewhere, on land or sea, in caves of the earth or palatial cathedrals, this supper has been celebrated. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup," says Paul (1 Cor. 11:26), "ye do show the Lord's death till he come." It was the custom of the early disciples to meet about the Lord's Table every first day of the week. This we learn from both sacred and secular history. Hence the Christian Church doesn't believe in celebrating it only once a month, or once in three months, or once a year, as the case may be. As we have here in the Book of God the inspired pattern, we are trying to conform our practice thereto. Any deviation from this rule is dangerous, and it is a cause of grave concern that so many churches to-day ignore the apostolic example of weekly communion.

Then again, we don't believe in debarring anybody from the Lord's Table, nor inviting anybody to it. In this we are different from others, especially from the Regular Baptists. We are, practically speaking, neither close-communionists nor open-communionists. In one sense, and the true one, we are close-communionists: *We will not commune with anybody but Christ.* You could not get me to commune with Brother Allen, dearly as I love him. I will not even commune with my own wife at the Lord's Table. I am such a close-communionist that I won't commune with anybody but my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This is the only right view on this question. But to debar anybody from the Lord's Supper is not our prerogative. There are some churches, you know, that will not allow anybody to sit at the Supper with them if not of their own peculiar faith and order. This is all wrong and deserves your condemnation. When we observe the Supper we say, "This is the Lord's Table for the Lord's People." We neither invite nor debar, but quote the words of the apostle, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat." It is purely an individual matter. It is the Lord's Supper, and we are his guests. What right has any guest to say to you, "Come," or, "Stay away?"

To-day Brother Haynes, Brother Ingram, Brother Hutto and myself, together with our wives, dined at the hospitable home of Brother Allen. Now suppose as we went in to dinner, I had said to Brother Haynes, "You get out! We don't agree. In our views regarding some particular points of Scripture we differ; so you go out on the doorstep until we get through dinner." What if I had conducted myself in that way? Don't you suppose Brother Allen would have said, "Who gave you authority to dismiss one of my guests?" I fancy that I would *feel cheap.* And

I fancy that these close-communionists would feel cheaper still when they invite people to stay away from the Lord's Table if they could only be made to realize how it displeases Him.

I will tell you what happened in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, a few years ago. Our Baptist friends had their church burned, and our people, being without a preacher at the time, invited their minister to preach in the Christian church. He very graciously came and preached an able and fraternal sermon; but when the time came to celebrate the Lord's Supper the Baptist preacher took his hat, and his little flock filed out of the building. Our people were good enough to preach to but not to sit with at the Lord's Table.

It is painful to record such happenings in this the evening of the 19th century. It was not the broad, sympathetic, and Scriptural spirit of Christianity that prompted this narrow action on the part of the Johnstown Baptists. It was the creed spirit, from which, oh, Lord, deliver us all!

It is the Lord's Table for all the Lord's People. Some may eat and drink unworthily; if so it is an individual matter and to suffer only individual condemnation. And remember, we commune with Christ, not with each other. This is one of the most joyful and helpful services of the church. May the day speedily come when all God's people will get right on this communion question. The teachings of the Bible are so plain concerning it that there is no excuse for being wrong.

Eighth: We are distinguished from the other churches in our position on the subject of Christian Union. First and foremost among all the great religious bodies the Christian Church has pleaded for the union of Christ's followers everywhere. When the

Campbells, Stones, Scotts, and other great minds of our earlier history, saw the divided state of the Christian world, and recognized the sad fact that thousands and tens of thousands were perishing because of these divisions, they determined to give their lives in an honest effort to get people to remove every barrier and become one in Christ. From that day to this the burden of our preaching has been the Union of God's People in accordance with the Scriptural ideal. And I am glad to say that our plea is leavening the whole Christian world. Great religious congresses and mass meetings of every kind that can bring Christian workers of every faith and order closer together are being held from time to time, and the spirit of fraternity is now abroad in the lands of the earth as never before.

We are making more converts proportionately than any other religious body. I suppose we are the greatest proselyters on earth, and I say it proudly. I always want it distinctly understood that I am a proselyter —would proselyte every living man if possible from the doctrinal errors of man to Scriptural truth. I would proselyte every living man if possible from human names and human creeds to the Bible and the Bible alone. Our simple, sensible, Scriptural plea brings in large numbers from other churches all over the land. They come gladly, desiring to be simply Christians, no more and no less.

There can be no true union except on the Word of God. We can never all consent to be Methodists, for instance. They are a strong, energetic, temperate, missionary people. They are to-day doing, and have long been doing, a great work for the Master; but the time will never come when all God's people can conscientiously join the Methodist church. The Presbyterian church also, with its scholarly men and

pious membership, is doing a great work; but the time will never come when all can be Presbyterians. The religious world can never unite on Calvinism, or Arminianism, *or any other ism.* The only place we ever can unite is on God's Book. The Bible and the Bible alone can be the only doctrinal basis of Christian union. And every man must be allowed to be his own interpreter of the Scriptures. God never intended that priests and theologians should sit in their dogmatical robes and hand down interpretations for the masses to accept as infallible. Every child of God should feel that God's Book was intended for him to study, interpret, and apply for his own good and the good of those about him.

We believe that the disunion of professed Christians is a sin. There is much talk about union oftentimes when there is no real union. Some preachers' idea of being one seems to be in not talking about their differences. They thank God that although they can't all see alike, they can bury the hatchet occasionally and work together. But a union that consists simply in a tacit understanding to avoid differences for a time is not the union for which our Lord prayed. Paul, in 1 Cor. 1:10, says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." We claim that the preachers who advocate divisions as a good thing, are positively breaking a divine commandment! Again and again in the New Testament we are exhorted to be one. Christ prayed (John 17:21) that his disciples might be one, "As thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." That prayer is not answered yet and it cannot be fully answered as long as divi-

sions and sectarianism exist. For centuries the whole religious world has been sadly divided over human names and human creeds; on traditions, doctrines, and theological deductions of human authority. Why can we not take the Bible and the Bible alone as our guide? Why can we not discard all ecclesiasticisms and take God's Word alone as the arbiter of all our differences? The Christian Church, with malice towards none and charity for all, is working and praying toward this blessed consummation.

And why not? We look over the globe and see only one-fifth of its population Christian. One-third of the world has never even heard of Christ. And yet millions of dollars are being wasted by God's people every year perpetuating their petty differences! "Oh, Religion, what crimes are committed in thy name!"

The Christian Church believes that it is possible for people to bury their prejudices and exalt Christ. Nay, we believe it *probable.* Look at the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor and at the Young Men's Christian Association. What a mighty union work they are doing! Is it possible that God will let his Son's prayer go unanswered? No. Union is coming. It is *in the air*, thank God, and those who fail to fall into line will soon be distanced.

I am sorry to see a disposition on the part of some, however, to hinder this general onward movement. It was a pity that the great Methodist Church, for instance, grew so nervous lest their young people should so far forget their sectarianism as to become wholly Christian, that its leaders thought it necessary to found a counter-movement in the Epworth League; and also the Baptist Church with its Young People's Unions. They evidently desired Baptist Union more than Christian Union. But I rejoice that the Young

People's Society of Christian Endeavor stands in the lead of all similar movements in the world's history. In thirteen years it has grown from a membership of forty-eight to an enrollment of two millions. And Dr. Clark himself, founder of the work, said a few years ago that he was surprised to learn how nearly parallel was the Endeavor movement with that of the Disciples. We are not working in the name of Campbell, but in the name of Christ. And the Woman's Christian Temperance union is not working in the name of Wesley, but in the name of Christ. And the Young Men's Christian Association is not working in the name of Luther, or Calvin, but in the name of Christ.

The International Sunday School Lesson Series have proven another wonderful help in the direction of Christian Union. Every Sunday about twenty million children sit down in different parts of the world and study the same divine words. In this way the attention of a large percentage of the religious world is centered on the same thing at the same time, and it is a great stride in the right direction.

Again, such men as Mr. Moody, Sam Jones, Mr. Mills, and other well known evangelists have helped to bring God's people closer together. They say, "We will come to your city and work for you, if all you professed Christians will drop your differences and work together as one band for the salvation of souls." Mr. Mills gained eight thousand signatures to his believer's card in Cincinnati. The leading churches united and gave him the support he needed. The success of Mr. Moody in filling the largest halls wherever he goes, must be attributed, not to his ability as a preacher, but to the royal support he receives from the many churches that consent to work together as one man under his leadership. Now

if God's people can unite for a six weeks' meeting; if they can bury all their differences for a time and be one in Christ, with the Bible as their only text-book, why can't they remain together for a year? And if for one year, then all the time? *They could if they only would.* It is for this gladsome end that the Christian Church is toiling. For the time when there will be no male nor female, no bond nor free, no rich nor poor, no north or south, but when all God's people shall be one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:28.)

But how are we going to get together?

Let us imagine ourselves in a mighty auditorium. In its four corners are four different men. They desire to come together, but neither will come to another corner. In the center of the room is a beautiful fountain. Finally some one proposes that they all meet at that fountain. They start for the common center. They come on forty, fifty, 100 feet. The nearer they come to the fountain the nearer they come to each other, each making concessions of location and space. At last they reach their destination and clasp hands around the sparkling waters of the fountain. Jesus Christ, the great fountain of life, liberty, and love, is set up in the center of the world. The nearer God's children come to Christ the nearer they will come to each other. Let us hasten the day when we can all clasp hands and sing, "Blest be the tie that binds!" God help us all to cease our strife and bury our differences forever! God help us all to draw near to that Great Fountain which is set for the world's cleansing! God help us all to strike hands in the spirit of those of old who said, "We be brethren."

It was John Livingston, I believe, who said, "United we stand, divided we fall." And he was a shrewd statesman who, commenting on this motto, exclaimed "If

we don't stand together, fellow citizens, we will hang separately!"

The saloons are 240,000 strong in our land. According to Governor St. John, 150,000 persons annually fill a drunkard's grave as a result of their pernicious work. Vice and wickedness of every sort are abroad in the land. Virtue is bartered, morals corrupted, sin allowed to run rampant in this "home of the brave and the free." Surely there is a greater demand to-day for united work among Christians than ever before. And the time has come when we should stand together in solid phalanx; when we should all be simply Christians, with only one name, one faith, one practice. This would insure a concentration of power against which the hosts of darkness could never stand.

There is another thing: Eight hundred millions are dying without the gospel. They are already burdened with isms of every description, like Buddhism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism, etc. We need not take sectarianism to them, for they would only laugh us to scorn. They can beat us badly on divisions. In India alone they claim three hundred and thirty million gods. They don't want any more human gods nor human doctrines. They are already theorized to death. I was talking with a returned missionary from India some time ago. I asked him if sectarian lines were as pointedly drawn over there as here. He replied, in substance, "No, no, no! we don't want to know anything about theological differences over there; we simply exalt Christ and his gospel. We have to do it. It is the only way to reach the poor, deluded, sin-sick heathen. We simply preach Jesus and the story of his wonderful love. His great sacrifice on the cross for fallen humanity is the burden of our sermons." Oh, that these ear-

nest words might fill us, and thrill us, and stir us to more urgent effort toward uniting God's children of every faith and name. The hungering hearts of those who sit in darkness ought to appeal to us so strongly that we would drop our differences and keep step hereafter to the music of *God's commands* and the *lost world's demands.*

These are the distinguishing differences between the Christian Church and our neighbors. Are they reasonable? Are they worth sacrificing for? Are they noble enough to demand a life's earnest service? I think so.

Is it any wonder the church is prosperous? Is it any wonder that skeptics are nonplussed at our position, and that the ablest infidel debaters cannot stand before it? Is it any wonder that tens of thousands are obeying the gospel under the labors of our evangelists? Is it any wonder that wherever they go the study of the Bible becomes an all-absorbing custom, and religious interest is quickened to the highest pitch? Our plea is so remarkably practical and wonderfully simple that it is not at all surprising that men like Garfield loved it better than life. Perhaps the most polished of any of our presidents intellectually, he lived and died in the Christian Church. For years he preached as opportunity offered, and left his impress on many of our Ohio congregations. It is not surprising that men like Jeremiah Black, the great jurist, was a life-long advocate of our plea. It ever has and ever must command the attention of the thinking world, for it is consistent, Scriptural, all-sufficient.

Father, mother, brother, sister, we invite you to come—*not to us, but to Jesus Christ.* Come to Him. Then hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, we will march together under the blood-stained banner of

the Cross. "Come thou with us and we will do thee good." If you are the victim of sectarian shackles, rise up to-night and throw them off. Don't be afraid to be a "turncoat." Some of the wisest and best men the world has ever seen were *turncoats*. Saul of Tarsus for instance, and Luther. The great need of the age is men of principle. If you believe the principles we advocate are right (and how can any sane, intelligent human being believe otherwise?) come now and identify yourself with us, and so take part in the greatest religious movement of modern times.

HOW TO HOLD OUT FAITHFUL.

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved."—Matt. 10:22.

We are here this morning rejoicing in the fact that 108 persons have accepted the invitation of the Lamb during our meetings, and have enrolled their names on the books of the church. We are glad that during the last two evenings six young men have made the good confession. During this revival a goodly number of young men who were in the service of sin, and not a few young ladies, have consecrated themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. And we are glad that some fathers and mothers, and some husbands and wives have come. We are anxious now that all these pardoned ones shall not turn back, shall not *backslide.*

There are a great many persons whose names are on the church books, but who are not faithful Christians. They are Christians in a nominal sense, because *once a Christian always a Christian.* There is no such thing as getting out of the Kingdom of Grace (the church) until they *die out.* But there is such a thing as being a sinful and slothful Christian. We have a good many of that kind in our various memberships nowadays. A man professes to be a Christian and bets on horses, for instance, or gambles in stocks, or votes for and patronizes the saloon. Can one do all that and still be a Christian? Yes, a rotten one. Such characters will soon run their course and drop into hell.

We are very anxious that those who have been converted in these meetings, should not turn back.

Hence my theme this morning is one of transcendent importance to the Church, "How to hold out faithful."

If you start in the Christian life and don't hold out faithful, it is just as bad as if you had never started at all. You need not think just because you have confessed Christ and put him on in holy baptism that you are going to be saved in Heaven after death whether or no, no matter how you live. No, no! You must live as a Christian ought to live or the Lord will never give you the crown of life.

It may be a long journey with you from earth to heaven, or it may be a short journey. I cannot tell you how long or how short it may be. But it is a journey that must be made with fear and trembling, with faith and work.

At one of my meetings a husband and wife accepted the Saviour, and started together in the heavenward way. A few weeks later I heard that the wife had departed this life. Her journey was short, and her reward came soon. It might be so with you.

We were talking about this hundred additions the other day. That is a large increase for one congregation in Chicago to have in one revival. There have been few greater victories in the history of the city. And yet it seems to me that we ought to have had many more. When we remember that a hundred persons were lost in the flood out west in a few hours the other day, it seems like slow work—saving 100 souls in several weeks—and yet again how thankful we ought to be that five score persons have been safely harbored in the fold of the Good Shepherd!

It is a great work, brethren, this saving of souls. I delight in it above all things. It fills my heart with joy to see people come to Christ, and it fills my heart with joy to see them remain faithful to Christ.

A few years ago I conducted a successful meeting in an Iowa city. Some months afterwards I saw one of the officers of the church, and I inquired of him very anxiously, "How are the new converts sticking?" And he said, "So far as I know, every one is faithful." How that rejoiced my heart! I was glad beyond language to express. At another place, in Missouri, we had over 100 additions to the church, among the number thirty young men. Six months later I met the Superintendent of the Sunday School from that church, and learned that every one of the new converts was holding out faithful.

I always aim to make the Gospel so simple that every one will understand it; and also try to make every new convert feel the importance of "adding to their faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance;" and all the other Christian virtues. It has been one of the delights of my ministerial life that very few, comparatively, who come to Christ under my preaching, poor as it is, ever turn back. But they "go on to perfection," as Paul enjoins, and many of my "children in the Lord" have become shining lights in the household of faith. I hope it will be so here, and that many of your best workers in the future will come from among these new converts. God grant that before many years have passed, some of you will have consecrated yourselves to the ministry, and that some will have gone as missionaries to foreign fields. This is my earnest prayer and desire in behalf of the dear ones brought to Christ during this meeting.

Now to our subject: "How to hold out faithful." Too many join the Church in winter only to turn back in water-melon season. Too many warm up awfully in the time of revivals only to become lax religiously and rotten in the time of temptation and trial. Too

many get cooled off during dog-days and fair time, and then along about lent they get stirred up again. It takes a continual revival to keep some people in the service. But I trust all those who have come to Christ during these special services will work in warm weather as well as in cold, in adversity as well as in prosperity. We should always rejoice in the Lord. And I trust you will all, under all circumstances, keep in the straight and narrow path which leadeth heavenward, realizing that the same Lord is with you when you are sad and when you are joyful. So whether on the mountain heights of victory or in the valley of defeat, learn to lean on His strong arm, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Now if we expect the young convert to hold out faithful, we must give him a few specific directions early in his Christian career. He wants to know what to do, and how to do it. I believe there are lots of people growing cold and careless in our churches for the lack of this knowledge. The Christian life is an active life, and it is a solemn duty we owe to our new recruits to give them work. Some well-meaning pastors object to revivals. They say that too many of the new converts go back to the world. That is doubtless true in some instances, for some objecting pastors are not worth shooting with a pop-gun. They are jealous of the evangelist, and they take delight in slighting his converts after the revival is over. They let them die a slow death from spiritual ennui. But there should be no conflict between pastor and evangelist. Both are called by God to two lines of work parallel in importance. Every church should have a good hearty revival once in a while, and then put the new converts to work. The true pastor will give them something to do,

and tell them how to do it. Some pastors and elders fail in their duty in this matter, and then when they observe that their "babes in Christ" are doing something not exactly consistent, scold them and give them a kick downward. This is hardly Scriptural, to say the least. I believe that the vast majority of our converts here will hold out faithful, for you have a pastor that will help you, and you are in a church famous for its fraternity.

I want to suggest to you to-day four rules, which if faithfully observed every day will enable you to "endure to the end." I will write these rules on the blackboard in full view of all. There might be many more given, but I think these four epitomize the entire question. You have to *endure to the end.* It will not do to be real religious six months; and then cool off and come to church only occasionally for a few months; and then move away somewhere, and in a year and a half backslide completely—yield to temptation, and give your life over to the service of the devil. If we would go to Heaven we must be true to Christ every day in the week, every week in the month, and every month in the year. Paul in writing to the Galatians said, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you?" Later on in their career than the time of which Paul spoke the Galatians became careless and committed many sins. So it will never do for you to stop *running* in the glorious race for a crown, for if you get tired after awhile and sit down and don't run any more Satan will get you sure. But if sometime you feel weak and weary, ask God to give you new strength and He will do it.

First of all then, if you want to hold out faithful, new and old converts alike, you *must* (I will not say simply *ought*, or that you *may*, if you get time; but you *must*),

Read the Bible every day.

You must read the Bible *seven days in the week.* I am convinced from an extended observation and from more than ordinary opportunities which I have improved to learn the truth in the matter that very few professing Christians read the Bible assiduously. If I should put this question this morning:—How many in the congregation have read seven chapters in God's Word during the past week? I don't suppose fifty hands would be raised. And yet this church numberes about 700 members! My hand would go up, for it has been my custom for several years to read carefully, and usually aloud, from one to five chapters daily, and I have had more joy, more profound satisfaction in the Christian life since I began the observance of this pleasant practice, than ever before. You may be old and gray-headed, my brother; or you may be a business man toiling from morning till night, with few moments for quiet meditation; but if you are a Christian you *can't afford to neglect to read the Word of God every day of your life.* Better, thrice over, neglect your morning paper, or go without your evening meal, than to neglect to feed upon the bread of life as we find it in God's great store-house of truth.

And when you do begin to read daily, *be persistent.* It is regular, systematic, thoughtful reading that counts. Do not, if unusually busy one day, put off reading until you have more leisure. As well put off eating and sleeping when busy until you have more time. The Bible is the great textbook of life, and our souls need to be refreshed from its sacred pages regularly every day.

Another thought right here: Don't read spasmodically and jerkingly. Some people just open the Bible at random and read wherever the eyes happen

to rest, and imagine that this is studying the Word of God! Suppose you were going to study the history of the United States; would you pick up the book and open at the French-Indian war one day, studying a page or two? And the next day would you open at the Period of the Reconstruction? And the next day at the account of the Settlement of Jamestown, or the story of Pocahontas? If you should follow this slip-shod method for four or five days you would doubtless grow very tired and say, "This book doesn't interest me at all," when it would not be the book's fault, but your own. Now a good teacher would tell you to commence at the beginning, at the period of the Discovery, and read every page carefully to the end. Such a course will give anybody a keener appreciation of the struggles and triumphs of our great country.

So with the Word of God. We must read it systematically and studiously. We must study its various passages with reference to their connection. We must fairly absorb it with this prayer in mind: *Teach me Thy will.* And *I am anxious to know what thou wouldst have me to do. Dear Father, open mine eyes that I may learn.* We should read with a realizing sense that it is God's Book, and that our Eternal Salvation depends on how we read and apply its divine teachings.

With these fundamental thoughts in mind, commence and read it through carefully and prayerfully from Genesis to Revelation. Then repeat again and yet again throughout life's journey. Many read the Bible through a dozen, twenty, and some few even fifty times. The more you read the Bible the more interesting, beautiful and precious it becomes to you. This is something that can be said of no other book. The finest piece of fiction will pall upon the mind

after two or three readings. And it is so with all human literature. The finest story I ever read, I think, "Ben Hur," by Gen. Lew Wallace, is absorbingly interesting and wonderfully helpful. And yet I never read the book but once. A second reading, I am sure, would mar my ecstatic regard for the work, and so it is doubtful if I will ever read it through again. I read the "Hoosier School-Master," by Edward Eggleston, twice while in my teens, but did not enjoy it nearly so much the second time as the first. But the Bible never palls on the mind, although we read it over and over again and again. I have read the 12th Chapter of Romans and the 23rd Psalm hundreds of times, and yet the more I read these marvelous selections the more beautiful and comforting they are. Each time we read the Word of God we receive new inspiration, an inspiration more heavenly and more powerful than that imparted by all other books combined.

So never neglect the study of God's Word if you want to hold out faithful. You are all busy people. You can't read four or five chapters at a time perhaps, but you can read one or two if you only try. Commence to-day. I wish all of our new converts would commence at the Book of Romans and read first of all the fourteen epistles written by the great Apostle Paul. Then the seven books written by James, Peter, and John. After that I would have you go back to the beginning of the New Testament and read the wonderfully interesting life of Christ as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, culminating in that matchless history of conversions, the Book of Acts. Then I would have you go back to the very beginning of the Bible and read the Pentateuch—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These books are more fascinating than the

choicest fiction, and full of wholesome food for the soul. Then read the historical books, beginning with Joshua and ending with Esther. Then the poetical books, including the Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. Then the prophets, and last of all, jump clear over to the end of the collection and read that most remarkable piece of literature in the world, the Book of Revelation. Follow some such plan as this, my friend, and you will find joy and satisfaction in reading the Word of God.

Yes, Read the Bible every day. You often have a few minutes just before dinner or just after the evening meal. Improve the time by reading the Bible. It is so common when we have a few odd moments to pick up the first thing we can get our hands on and read to kill time. Some pick up the almanac and read the jokes when they might be storing the mind with something valuable. I have no objection to joke reading occasionally as a means of mental recreation; but I do insist that the average funny column affords little food for thought.

In this city thousands of people work down town. You have a half-hour's ride on the cars going and coming. Why not carry a little Testament in your pocket and read a few chapters each day, or better, commit to memory some favorite passage. In this way you could soon memorize a large part of the Bible.

If possible read at the same time every day. Be as regular in your devotions as a clock. If you will do this you will soon come to enjoy the exercise, and the profit will be beyond computation. I am trying to be explicit here, for half the battle in "Holding out Faithful" is in knowing how. Fill your soul with the Christ and His redeeming love, and any service you may be called upon to render for God or humanity will be sweet. "Search the scriptures, for in them

ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me," said Jesus. If you want to love your Master better, if you want to serve him more faithfully, if you want to help dying souls to a better life, *search the Book.* Neglect it not, and when at last you are called upon to lay down this life, you will be ready to enter Heaven with a keener appreciation of the Beautiful City and its Tree of Life.

"Holy Bible, Book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine,
Mine to tell me whence I came,
Mine to teach me what I am.

"Mine to chide me when I rove;
Mine to show a Saviour's love.
Mine thou art to guide and guard
Mine to punish or reward.

"Mine to comfort in distress,
Suffering in this wilderness.
Mine to show by living faith,
Man can triumph over death.

'Mine to tell of joys to come,
And the rebel sinner's doom;
Oh, thou Holy Book Divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine."

(*Burton.*)

In the second place, you are to

PRAY.

Read the Bible and Pray. I put in the conjunction *and*, for the two duties must not be separated. I am going to connect the other rules also with this little conjunction, thus making a golden chain which should ever be kept intact. If you take out one link the chain would be broken, and this would never do, for all the duties mentioned are equally imperative.

Read the Bible—How often? Every day. Pray—How often? Every Sunday morning regularly?

Should that be the rule? No. If a person can't pray but once a week he might as well not pray at all. Paul enjoins us to "pray without ceasing." This does not mean that we are to pray only on Sunday, and then pitch into business the next morning and work all the week like everything—for six days without ever taking thought of God and our sacred relationship to Him. No, not at all. I want you to think more about doing right and going to Heaven than anything else. Get rich if you can without being dishonest, and without slighting God. I wish every one of you were worth ten dollars where you are worth one to-day. It is not wrong to get lots of money if you get it honestly. It is not money *per se*, but the *love of money* which Paul declares to be the root of all evil. It is the dangerous habit of working six days for self with all the energy you possess, and then giving to the Lord's service only the little energy you have left, that I would guard you against.

A young man saw an advertisement in a paper reading something like this: "How to get rich. Send 50 cents, etc." He sent his fifty cents and got the receipt. What do you think it was? "Work like the devil and never spend a cent!" Many people come very near following that plan, and seem to think that they can say a few prayers on Sunday and make up for their neglect of God during the week. But the faithful Christian will make prayer a daily business. It is one of the mightiest developing forces of the universe, and we cannot afford to be careless in its use. Holland says:—

> "Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
> But we build the ladder by which we rise
> From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
> And mount to its summit, round by round."

You can't "endure to the end" by merely saying a few prayers on Sunday, or by manifesting a little

more than usual religious fervor during a revival. Serving Christ is a daily business, day by day, round by round, link by link.

A true Christian should never let twenty-four hours go by without prayer. You should return thanks at the table; and of course you should have family worship regularly if you are the head of a family. Depend upon it, the days will not go right, and the children will not grow up as they should, if you neglect this sweet privilege of spending a few minutes together each day about the family altar.

I do not think the exercises at family worship should be long. There is no necessity for reading seventy-five verses and praying fifteen minutes each time. But I do think you ought to spend four or five minutes a day with your family in Bible study and prayer. Make the service simple and sweet. Let mother lead in prayer occasionally, or one of the older children. It is a good thing always to repeat the Lord's Prayer in concert. Thus each member of the household learns to pray. Keep out of ruts in this service. Make it attractive, and in years to come your children will rise up and call you blessed for the good influences set in motion at the old hearthstone.

If you are a young man, or a young lady, boarding away from home, you ought to spend a little time in your room studying God's Word and in prayer every day. Montgomery has well styled prayer the health of the Christian's life. No one should try to live without prayer.

Fathers, mothers, old people, if you have been in the church fifty years it makes no difference. You ought to go apart and pray every day just the same as the young person who has just entered the Christian life. If an half hour were spent in this way every

day, I think it would be a blessed oasis to you in the desert of your failing health and hopes. Martin Luther, you remember, spent three hours in prayer each day, and he was one of the busiest men the world has ever known. For some natures this might be too much, but for others it would be just the thing. It would smooth many a rough place for them in the journey of life.

Oh, get on your knees often, my brother, and talk to God with reference to the affairs of every day. Confide in Him, and lean upon Him. You should never undertake to do anything that you do not ask God to bless you in doing. You should never go forth to your daily work without asking God to accompany and help you. You should never engage in any new enterprise until you have counseled with the Lord concerning it. Remember this, dear friends, and it may save you from many a fall. If you can get down on your knees consistently and ask God to help you to win at the gambling table, then go ahead. But who ever heard of a Christian returning from a dance hall, or from a saloon, or from a brothel, and bowing down to thank God for the good time he has had? Why, the very thought seems ridiculous. Very well: the lesson is, never take any part in anything that you can't ask God to bless. Every ambition, every impulse of the heart, every undertaking of life should be fairly saturated in the spirit of prayer.

Some professing Christians do not seem to enjoy the service of Jesus. Investigation usually discloses the fact that they neglect secret prayer. Some seem to have grown a little tired of the Church. What's the matter? Why, they fail to pray.

Let us not be slow to ask of God whatever we desire. "Pray without ceasing," says Paul. "In everything give thanks." (Thes. 5:17, 18.) We should be

practical in our petitions. Often should we say, Lord, give me wisdom. And, Lord, direct me what to do and what not to do. One cannot estimate the helpfulness of secret prayer. You should have some regular place to go, a place that will soon become sacred to you because of its sweet associations. If you have a room of your own go there. If you have a room with some friend or relative, you can find perhaps an occasional hour when you can be alone; if not, you can select some other place where you can be alone with God. When a boy I used to go out in my father's orchard and there I would bow down among the trees in the moonlight and pour out my soul to God, and I know that He blessed me very much. Do not undervalue this suggestion of being alone with God regularly, for it is very essential.

A friend of mine related to me not long ago how his room-mate in college used to do. He was a very religious young man, but very unostentatious in his devotions. Every morning he arose early and made his way to an old sawmill hard by their boarding place that he might engage in secret prayer without interruption. At first, my friend told me, he did not know what to think of his room-mate for these untimely walks. So one morning he followed him at a respectful distance, and had his curiosity rewarded by seeing his companion bowed behind a great log in the mill yard, and pouring out his heart to his Maker. That young man afterwards became an able preacher and college president. I know him well.

If I could only get all our brethren, one million strong, old and young, to follow this rule, we would soon reach a sphere of usefulness and influence which would surprise the most sanguine. If I could get our six thousand ministers to make this an invariable rule, an iron-clad rule not to be departed from under

any circumstances, I believe we could speedily double and triple our numbers, our wealth, and our influence for good. May God help you one and all to pray every day in secret.

In the third place, if you would hold out faithful, you must

GO TO CHURCH.

By this expression I mean for you to be regular and faithful in attendance upon all the services of the sanctuary. Be at the Prayer Meeting, for instance. From this church of 700 or more members there should be at least 300 at the mid-week Prayer Meeting. You should have not only a pleasant, sociable time at this service, but you should have many conversions.

Be at the Sunday School service, and take some active part therein. Be at church every Sunday morning regularly, without fail. When the table of the Lord is spread with the holy emblems of His sufferings and death, it is our duty to be there and commune with Him. This in my opinion is the most important service of the week, and you should never fail to be on hand at this hour unless you are sick, or out of the city, or have some other reasonable excuse.

Then be at the Sunday night service. Many pastors deplore the fact that their members will not be at their posts of duty on Sunday nights. Some of them go to bed early. Some are too lazy after partaking of a chicken dinner to come to church. They prefer to spend the evening in their hammocks. Some take a little bicycle ride, or walk through the park. But remember the pastor needs and deserves your earnest coöperation in his efforts to save souls, and you need the lovely songs, the stirring sermon, and

the hearty hand-shakes afforded at the house of God. Once form the habit of attending, and depend upon it the evening service will be a great pleasure and benefit to you.

Throw your whole life into the Church, my brother. Make it your first and last business to engage in the service of Jesus. There is no business that promises such large results. Every member of the church should be a *working* member. Any faithful pastor can do more with fifty working members than with five hundred of the indifferent, sleepy, happy-go-lucky sort. You may not be rich in this world's goods, but you can be rich in heart service.

I remember that at one place where I was pastor, we had an old sister who was as poor as the traditional Job's turkey that we have all heard so much about. She couldn't do much in the way of church work. She was as poor in speech as in purse. She did not know much save that the old, old story was true. But she was of great assistance to me, for she was always at her place. There in her pew at my right, rain or shine, hot or cold, she was to be seen as regularly as the weeks rolled round. If she was not there we all knew that Grandma was sick, or out of the city. Her unfailing regularity and stern punctuality at all regular services made up for any other deficiencies, and gave us great pleasure. She was always appreciative and never gave utterance to any unkind criticism of her pastor. That kind of a member is worth five times as much as those of superior intelligence and wealth who only come to church when the weather is just right, or who stay away because the preacher occasionally says something they don't like.

You owe it to your pastor, you owe it to the church, you owe it to the world about you, and above

all you owe it to the Lord, to be patient, earnest, faithful, persistent, and consistent Christians. Every professor of religion ought to attend church regularly. We have perhaps thirteen million church members in this country. What a mighty army! Why, we could turn the world upside down, figuratively speaking, if they would all go to church regularly and live up to the requirements of their sacred profession. But there are so many vacant seats. You ought to be at your post of duty in the church just as regularly as you are at your place of business. Form the habit once and it will soon become a second nature, and you will feel lost if at any time you shall be unable to get out to service; you will feel that something has gone wrong. There is no good reason why the pews of our churches should not be filled to overflowing every Lord's Day the year around.

It is the grandest place in the world to go, the place where brother meets with brother to learn of God's law and love, and where saints rejoice together in blessed fellowship with the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. So I beg of you, if you would be true to Christ, to be faithful in the observance of this rule, and *go to church* regularly as long as you live.

In the fourth place, if you would hold out faithful, you must

PAY.

This rule is one of very great importance if not so popular. It completes the quartette nicely,—

Read the Bible
And pray;
Go to Church
And pay.

Makes a little poem, don't it? Not very good

poetry, I admit, but it's good theology, *gilt edged* theology. AND PAY—this is the last but by no means the least requirement. You can't go to heaven without paying, unless you are a pauper and haven't anything with which to pay. Of course if you haven't anything, the Lord will let you pass; for "where nothing's given, nothing's required." But I doubt if there is a single member in this large congregation who is not able to pay something. I doubt if you can find twenty professing Christians in the great City of Chicago who cannot pay anything. What if it is only a penny or two, it is *something*, and the Lord accepts "according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not."Everybody has some money. If you are too poor to pay anything toward the support of the Gospel, then the brethren should take up a collection for you or send you to the poor-house. As long as you have any money at all it is your Christian duty to pay part of it to the Lord. If you don't you will never hold out faithful, and you will never be truly prosperous.

I want you to realize that it is your duty, rather your *privilege*, to *pay*, PAY, PAY constantly. It may be that after awhile, when Mr. Edward Bellamy gets his Utopian schemes into operation, and removes the troublesome presence of filthy lucre as we know it to-day, we will not have to pay. But under the present condition of things there is no place for dead-heads in the church. It takes money for almost everything,—money to buy beefsteak; money to buy potatoes; money to pay for what you wear; money to pay for what you drink (a wofully big item with some people); and it is money, money from the cradle to the grave. An old proverb says, "Money makes the mare go." And in a very practical sense that is true, for the mare must have a harness, and a driver, and something to eat.

So it takes money to make the church go. It takes money to pay the pastor, and the evangelist, and the missionary. It takes money to build the house, and pay for the pulpit, and the Bible. It takes money to supply the Sunday School with books and maps and newspapers. It takes money to enlarge the work of the Church in any direction so as to extend the borders of Zion and save lost souls. If you are a true Christian, therefore, you will help *pay*. Those who ignore this part of God's service need the prayers of the brotherhood, for they are so stingy and narrow that the devil will get them sure if they are not led to a speedy reformation.

Too many church members like to ride on free tickets. Ask a pastor, "How many members have you?"

"About seven hundred," he replies.

"How many of them are paying members?"

"Oh, not more than two or three hundred."

And I guess if you take the pains to look into the matter carefully you will find that only about 185 have any credits after their names on the treasurer's books. Where are the 515? Ah, riding on free tickets, or rather dead-heading their way at the expense of the faithful few. I want to warn all who belong to this sorry class that they will wake up some bright morning and find that their tickets are canceled. The angel who keeps the Jasper Gate will not know them.

Why should you want to eat with the people of God when you do not help bear the burdens of the household of faith? "He that worketh not shall not eat," is the universal rule. Why should you then expect to enjoy all the privileges of the church without helping pay? A tramp comes to your door and mutters a shamefaced request for some bread and butter.

But you have little sympathy and less food for him, because when you offer him work he spurns it. Why should a Christian expect to feed on the "sure mercies of David" when he spurns the work God so abundantly offers? To give money is one of the best ways in the world to work for Christ. If you have it to give, even if only a little, but selfishly keep it back, you can not hold out faithful. It is a good rule, the faithful observance of which is sure to bring rich blessings. Every member of every church ought to pay continuously and cheerfully all along life's journey.

Don't be like an old fellow I have heard of out in Missouri. You know there are some good old souls who don't believe in paying preachers any stated salary. They are not very common now; most of them have gone to heaven (perhaps). A few may be seen now and then in museums, or in old, dead churches where they keep human curiosities. This old man in Missouri used to get up in social meeting and say, "I thank the Lord for a free Gospel, brethren. I have been a member of this church five and forty years and, thank God, it has not cost me but a quarter. Hallelujah!"

An average congregation of 700 members ought to pay not less than $10,000 a year to the Lord's Work. And yet how few are doing the half of it! God's people in this age do not seem to have learned the first principles of giving as yet. There are, of course, noted exceptions among individuals and among churches. But as a rule we are just *playing* when it comes to the great question of Church finance.

I wish I might impress it deeply upon you, one and all, that it is the *duty of every member, old or young, to pay in proportion to his ability.*

"But how may I know just what my ability is in God's sight?" inquires one.

I will tell you. It is a question upon which there is a wide-spread indifference and ignorance. And yet, with God's Book in hand it is a question easily settled if we are only willing to be honest. Moses said to the Israelites, "The tithe is the Lord's." I claim therefore that no man, woman or child ought to think of putting the Lord off with less than a tenth of his entire income. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, and Melchizedek was a type of Christ. We should pay tithes to our Master, the Great High Priest of our souls.

When the Lord gives you ten dollars, pay Him back at least one dollar of it. Have a little book and keep a strict account with God. When you receive on salary $50 or $100, put it down in the income column. From whatever you receive in the way of legitimate income, put aside one tenth for the Lord. Then when you pay into the church, or mission treasury any money, or when a poor man comes to your door that you feel like assisting, take the money you wish to give out of the tenth thus set aside. When the Lord's column foots up one tenth the amount of your income column, but not till then, you may be said to have fulfilled your financial obligations to the church.

As a people we may well be proud, for we have the invincible plea of the world. We are right on faith; we are right on repentance; we are right on baptism. In debate we can easily whip the whole theological world. But I must say that when it comes to the question of giving we fall far short of our duty. Several years ago I wrote a forty-seven page pamphlet entitled, "The Lord's Exchequer; or Proportionate Systematic Paying by the Tithing System." I rejoice to say that many of our foremost writers and workers have recognized the value of this little

work. A few, of course, oppose its suggestions on theoretical grounds, and some, I surmise, because they are covetous. But it is an encouraging sign when we see earnest Christian workers all over the country adopting the practice advocated in my humble pages.

Well, whatever may be thought of the tithing system which I have urged, nobody has yet questioned my statistics. And yet I make the startling assertion that our people, as a people, pay only *one sixtieth of their income* to all religious and benevolent enterprises appealing to us for support. Certainly we have much to learn yet about giving. And while we are right doctrinally, let us be careful that we are not *robbers practically*. Now it does not make any difference how large your family is, or how sick you may be, or how heavy may be the demands upon your purse, you should pay one tenth of your income to the Lord. It is a solemn debt. When God graciously allows you to retain for your own use *nine-tenths* of everything, is it asking too much that you should be honest and pay Him his rightful interest, if we may call it such? You rent a store and you have to pay your rent. You own a farm, and you have to pay your taxes. You borrow a thousand dollars, and you have to pay the interest. Why not be as just with God as you are with your fellow men?

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," says David. Everything we have belongs to God, our time, our talent, our money, our land, it is all His. We are merely God's stewards, and must give a strict account of the manner in which we have used His property at the Last Day.

When the Church shall come to that point where it will realize its responsibility; when it shall know and feel that to give anything less than the tithe is

an insult; and when it shall fully understand that to pay less is robbery, then and not till then will our offerings for the support of the Gospel be commensurate with our glorious opportunities.

When the Israelites were faithful in paying their tithes to Jehovah they were wonderfully prosperous; but when they were unfaithful they were unfortunate. The Lord said to them, through the prophet Malachi, "Ye have robbed me." "Wherein have we robbed Thee?" said they. "*In tithes and offerings.*" (Mal. 3:8.) The Jews are the best financiers in the world. Why is it? Because for thousands of years their ancestors observed the tithing law, and it developed in their generations a business sagacity such as the world had never seen before, and may never see again.

The tithing system is eminently practical from a business standpoint. Its observance fosters carefulness, thrift, and honesty. It prevents waste and slothfulness. I don't care how poor you are, you can't afford to cheat the Lord out of His tenth. If you have only fifty cents income a day, five cents of that belongs to the Lord. Prove yourself a faithful steward in little things, and He will not be slow in proving His willingness to trust you with larger things. I know that since I began to tithe my income faithfully, several years ago, the Lord has blessed me greatly. I was in debt and had been nearly all my life. It was hard to "make ends meet." But I began laying sacredly aside God's tenth, and He lifted me out of debt and has given me great blessings besides—success in His work, joy in my home, and peace in my soul.

The nine-tenths with God's blessing will go farther if we give the other tenth to the Lord, because when we set aside the tithe we will be more careful in our use of the other nine-tenths than we would have

been had we used it all for ourselves. And this carefulness bears the fruit of prosperity. I don't say that the Lord will work any miracles of special providence in our behalf. But I do say if we are honest with our Heavenly Father, He will be honest with us. So if you want to hold out faithful, lay aside sacredly one tenth. Some families have a tin box made and in this box, which they call the "Lord's Box," they deposit faithfully from time to time one-tenth of whatever income they may have. And then when they pay anything for the support of the Gospel, they take it out of the Lord's money. They never have any trouble in solving the question, "How much?" but only, "*To what?*" All the money in the tithe-box is sacred, and they feel that they have no more right to go to that money and take a dollar out for self and not return it, than I have to go to your drawer and take your money. And when you all make this a matter of conscience, as you ought to do to-day, you will feel the same way.

There are many questions asked concerning the tithing system, and many objections made, but they are all answered in the pamphlet referred to, a copy of which any one desiring it may secure by sending ten cents with your address to the Columbian Book Co., Decatur, Ill. When I was preparing this treatise, among many others whose sympathy I sought to enlist was Sister Persis L. Christian, the distinguished lecturer and writer. But she objected to the system, and wrote me suggesting a case something like the following: "Suppose one man has an annual income of ten thousand dollars, with no sickness and only a small family to support; his neighbor has an income of a thousand dollars, with a large family to support, and much sickness. Is it therefore just that the poorer man should be compelled to pay the same percentage of his income as the richer man?"

The objection is easily answered. It is always right to be honest—to be "just before generous." The tithe is an honest debt. The rich man owes it, and pays $1000. The poor man owes it and pays $100. Neither is eased and the other burdened by this system, for it is fair and equitable in all its bearings. But I certainly admit that the rich man, under his more favorable circumstances, should give more than the tenth; but the poor man should never give less. Otherwise he would not deserve prosperity.

After the pamphlet was out, Mrs. Christian received a copy, read it, and wrote me again, saying, "I am systematically tithing my income this year." She found it just what was needed, and remarked its superiority over the old, hap-hazard way of giving.

If we could put it on the consciences of the people, if we could only make them realize that it is as sinful to withhold from the Lord the tenth as it would be to go to your friend's drawer and take his money, it would be but a question of time when our church and mission treasuries would groan with offerings. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse," says the Lord, "that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it!" (Mal. 3:10.) If your salary is $70 per month, always lay aside $7 of it for the Lord. Then you will always have something ready to give when worthy appeals come to your door. You will always know how much you have to give, and all you will have to worry about is where to put it so it will do the most good.

Read the Bible
And pray;
Go to Church
And pay.

Do these things regularly, faithfully, persistently all the days of your life, and I can assure you that not one of you will fail to hold out faithful. Link all these four rules together with an unbreakable chain, for one is just as important as another. It will never do to leave anything out. Don't say, "I will read the Bible, but I will not pray." Don't say, "I will pay something occasionally to help the Church along, but I will not attend its services, for I haven't time, and then I don't like the preacher very well anyhow." Don't say, "I will pray, but I won't pay. I need all my money worse than the Church needs it." Oh, selfish man! When Christ gave His *all* for you. But be not deceived; you must learn to pay if you ever expect to enter Heaven.

Christianity is a practical thing, and wonderfully comprehensive. It touches us at every angle of life. The service of Christ is the greatest service in the world. It is sweet, uplifting, satisfying.

I want to read you Josephine Pollard's little poem entitled "Work for the Day." I have carried a copy of it in my pocket for years, and never tire of reading it:—

"I have work enough to do
Ere the sun goes down,
For myself and kindred too,
Ere the sun goes down;
Every idle whisper stilling,
With a purpose firm and willing,
All my daily task fulfilling,
Ere the sun goes down.

"I must speak the loving word,
Ere the sun goes down;
I must let my voice be heard,
Ere the sun goes down,
Every cry of pity heeding,
For the injured interceding,
To the light the lost one leading,
Ere the sun goes down.

"As I journey on my way,
Ere the sun goes down,
God's commands I must obey,
Ere the sun goes down.
There are sins that need confessing,
There are wrongs that need redressing,
If I would obtain the blessing,
Ere the sun goes down."

May these sentiments take hold upon your hearts this morning. Resolve that you will never let the sun go down on a day that is not spent earnestly in Christ's service. When you lie down to rest at the close of each day, may it be with the assurance that if Jesus calls for your soul before morning, he will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into thy joy." Remember Paul's example in Phil. 3:14: "I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Remember also his urgent appeal in Rom. 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Young men, young women, boys and girls, remember that "life is real, life is earnest," and you ought not to spend your days carelessly. Many of you have consecrated your lives to Jesus. Now strive to *hold out faithful.* Strive to *endure to the end.* There is no promise to him that falleth by the way. So let every hour of life be well spent. Be in earnest. Oh, for more earnestness in the work of Jesus; for more whole-hearted, unfeigned, transparent devotedness! Earnestness covers a multitude of faults. Introduce the earnestness, the ambition and the hopefulness of this busy, rushing, nineteenth-century life into your work for Christ, and He will crown you with an abundance of blessings here and with an unfading crown hereafter.

The toils of this life will soon be over. The jour-

ney from the cradle to the grave is a short one at best. In a few score years every one that lives to-day will have passed away, and "the place that knows us now will know us no more." We must all cross over the dark river and give an account for the deeds done in the body.

I long to meet all there who have come forward during this series of meetings. I want to see you who sit about me this holy, happy morning all there with smiles upon your faces, with crowns upon your heads, and palms of victory in your hands. I want to join with you Over There in the "Song of Jesus and the Lamb."

And you will all be there if you will only *hold out faithful.* There is no doubt, no uncertainty about it at all.

In five years from now, if I meet your devoted pastor somewhere and ask him, "How are the young men and the maidens, the boys and the girls, and the heads of families, that came to Christ during our meetings? Are they walking worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called?" I trust he will be able to say, "So far as I know, every one has held out faithful." I trust he will be able to say, "I don't know of a single one that has gone back to the world. Some are now preaching the Gospel, and many of the number are now among our very best members."

Do these four things in the spirit of the Lord Jesus, and not one of you will ever fail in the Christian life. Do these four things, as every follower of Christ ought to do them, and you will be saved every hour and day that you live, and rewarded at last with "the crown that fadeth not away." God grant that it may be so, not only with those who sit before me in this large auditorium to-day, but with all the redeemed everywhere throughout the world!

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